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THE
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O F
N A T U R E
P U R S U E D.

B Y
EDWARD SEARCH, Esq;

VOLUME II. PART III.
T H E O L O G Y.

Τὸ γνωστὸν τῷ Θεῷ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς· ὁ γὰρ
Θεὸς, αὐτοῖς ἐφάνερωσε. Τὰ γὰρ ἀοράτα αὐτῷ
ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου, τοῖς ποιήμασι νοούμενα κα-
θοραῖται, ἥτε αἶδι· αὐτῷ δύναμις καὶ δειότης.
Rom. Ch. i. 19, 20.

L O N D O N:
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MDCCLXVIII.

THE
HISTORY
OF
NATURE

PURSED

BY

EDWARD SEYMOUR

VOLUME I

THEOLOGY

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T H E
L I G H T O F N A T U R E
P U R S U E D.

V O L. II. P A R T III.

C H A P. XXIV.

N A T U R E O F T H I N G S.

HA V I N G now dismounted my Pegasus and gotten safe upon firm ground again without any bruises or broken bones or crack in the Pericranium that my friends can perceive, let us turn him loose upon the common for the use of others who may be disposed to take the like adventurous flight, and let us proceed for the rest of our way in the safer tracts that reason shall beat out upon the solid bottom of experience and observation. But since in the Illusion § 71 of the last chapter I have happened to mention a nature of things which could not subsist before the things themselves whereof it was

the nature, and there are many persons who insist that we may know, by experience of our own thoughts, there are things and a nature of them which must have subsisted eternally, uncreated, independent on the Will and power of the Almighty, which he cannot alter nor depart from, but serve for an indispensable rule of his conduct in the creation and government of his worlds: since this doctrine is so zealously maintained, it will be worth while, before we canvass the truth of it, to enquire what is to be understood by that expression *The nature of things*. It has been employed by the orthodox, Cudworth in particular building largely upon it as upon the sole stable foundation, but seems now to be chiefly in use among the freethinkers, who are very forward to tell you precisely what God can or cannot do: he cannot work a miracle, cannot give a revelation, cannot guide the motions of a free agent, nor make such a one impeccable, nor annex reward to an assent of the mind, nor make all his creatures of equal degree without a continued gradation from his own perfections down to nothing; for these are contrary to the nature of things. If you ask what things they mean, or what by the nature of them, they will not vouchsafe, or rather cannot give an explanation, but are angry with you as a
captious

captious person for putting the question ; yet still go on to lay a mighty stress upon those words without having any clear or settled idea of their import. It seems extraordinary that persons who are so severe upon others for using expressions they do not understand, should fall into the like absurdity themselves, and pretend to build demonstrations upon principles whereof they have no clearer nor more adequate idea than the vulgar they affect to ridicule have of their mysteries : both lay an implicit dependence upon words without a meaning, and both expect that a constant repetition of positive assertions chimed into their ears by others, should pass for proof and explanation.

2. Since then we can get no light for understanding the language from those in whose mouths it passes most currently, let us try what we can strike out for ourselves : and upon asking what is meant by things the first obvious question occurring is that they must be the substances existing. For the rudiments of our knowledge come all from sensation : when we see or hear or feel, there must be some agent, some substance to operate upon our senses : and from hence we derive our evidence of external objects, as we do that of our own existence from the perceptions impressed upon us by them together with

the alterations produced in them by our activity; for there must be a substance to perceive as well as an object to be perceived, and an agent to act as well as a subject to be operated upon.

But our knowledge of substances seems to consist wholly of the differences among them; our definitions and descriptions contain the particularities of the subject distinguishing it from every thing else. For which reason we know nothing of our internal organs, the nerves and fibres of our brain, because whatever discoveries anatomy may have made, we have no experience of any diversity of operation among them, but for ought we can discern our sensations of every various kind may come conveyed to us through the same channel. For the same reason many remain so ignorant of themselves and make such difficulty to fix the idea of their own perceptive individual, because it is the same self that receives all their sensations, reflections and perceptions whatever: therefore the difference of their perceptions does not lead them into the knowledge of themselves, tho' it does into that of externals affecting them therewith. For we cannot penetrate the essence of substances, we can apprehend them only by their qualities or powers of affecting us or of producing and receiving alterations among

among one another causing them to exhibit other appearances than they did before.

But the same substances possess so many qualities, and vary them so often according to their situations, their mutual affections, relations, compositions and associations, that it would be inconvenient for use, and indeed impracticable, to call them all to mind: therefore our ideas in common discourse and even in meditation, are for the most part if not always partial, containing some only but not all of the qualities or circumstances we may know upon mature consideration belong to the subject in our thoughts. And there is the less wonder at this because the appearances to our senses are likewise partial: nobody ever saw the whole circumference of a ball, nor all the sides of a cube. When a man stands before us, we see only his face and hands and the fore part of his dress; and when we would think of him in his absence, the same appearance occurs without the least idea of his back altho' we know well enough he must have one. And when we speak of him fate down at table, we would not choose to think of that unseemly part without which there can be no sitting: our idea contains no more than so much of his body as would appear

without legs or feet and in a lower situation than if he stood upright.

But the similitude of one or a few qualities found in many substances differing widely in other respects suits our convenience extremely well, enabling us to talk intelligibly of numbers by one name expressive of those qualities wherein they agree : whence come our ideas of Genera and Species. For as Mr. Locke observes, the name of a species denotes those qualities wherein a set of individuals agree selected from those wherein they may differ, and a genus is a further selection out of those qualities of some wherein a greater number of individuals agree who do not agree in them all. Thus the word Horse expresses such particulars as belong to every horse exclusive of size, shape or colour, wherein they are not all alike : as the word Animal does such of these particulars as belong equally to an eagle, a dolphin or a frog, separated from those peculiar to the species of horses. Hence likewise we form our judgements, which commonly run upon species and genus or upon adjectives denominating some quality considered apart from the substance. Thus we say a horse is an animal, a crow is black, an elephant bigger than a sheep. But sometimes we turn our adjectives into substantives, and then can make
genus

genus and species of them as well as of substances : for red is one sort of colour, green another, and Colour is the Genus or Kind comprehending those two with all other particular colours under it ; as Sound is the genus comprehending all the several Sorts of sound that can be made.

3. Of these partial ideas one species is the abstract, for abstraction signifies the drawing off or selection of one or a few things from others wherewith they were by nature connected. When this selection is made by the senses, we do not call it an abstraction, nor unless it be done by a voluntary act of the mind : and these abstractions are of two sorts, those strictly so called, as when we talk of abstract notions or abstract reasonings, which are such only as the speculative make with labour of thought for their particular use ; and others which we are led into without trouble by the common occasions of life. For there are many abstract ideas extremely familiar to the vulgar, such as man, bird, noise, white, large, and so forth, of which they can talk currently yet without any thought of the substances whereto they belong. Wherefore it seems strange that Berkley and some others should deny that we have any abstract ideas, for all partial ideas are in the same case, whether the
separation

separation be made by our own act or by the operation of our senses; and it is so far from being true that we are incapable of partial ideas and appearances, that daily experience testifies we have scarce any others: but if my senses can exhibit to me a half man sitting behind a table without legs or lower parts, and my memory can make a further separation by certifying to me a week afterwards that I had seen a man sitting there, yet with so little remembrance of his features that I should not know him again if shown me, surely I can make another separation of a human figure having eyes, nose, mouth and so forth, without thinking whether the nose be long or short, what colour the eyes are of, or what width the mouth.

And here I have the pleasure of joining in alliance with my lord Bolingbroke, for the spirit of opposition so little possesses me that I am glad to concur in sentiment with any body where I can: I have once or twice stood up on behalf of Epicurus, and am now as ready to follow his lordship upon the possibility of abstraction and the dependent nature of things, whereon I think he argues closely and soundly; tho' for the most part his philosophical essays, as he calls them, seem rather House of Commons harangues, as unfit for the schools of philosophers as
their

their lectures would be for the other place, better calculated, like some modern orations, for amusing and tripping up than for counselling and conducting : yet even here he appears to have proceeded with more zeal for running down poor Cudworth than maintaining the cause of truth. And in the course of his argument he seems to have deserted it by apostatizing into Berkley's notion, that we cannot have the idea of a species unless by some particular individual to stand as a representative of the rest : which notion contradicts the constant experience of facts. For we talk every day of species, as men, cattle, birds, noises, colours : we know what we mean in using these terms and are understood clearly by one another ; but a man can scarce be said to understand himself who has no ideas of what he says, nor to be understood by another without ideas of his words. The hearer may have different ideas from the speaker, and then misapprehends him, but to understand aright, the very same ideas must pass from the one to the other.

Now the representative individual, to be clearly apprehended, must rise in the imagination with some determinate size, shape, colour, posture, in motion or quiescent : therefore if this idea were necessary for understanding the specific name, no man could
certainly

tainly understand another in the most common conversation, because he could never be sure the same representative, which was in the mind of the other, passed unaltered to himself. Should I send to my bailiff in the country to buy me a couple of milch cows against my going down, I should seem to understand myself fully, I believe he would understand me as fully and execute my orders punctually ; yet I am not conscious that in giving such orders I have any particular cow in my thoughts : but his lordship it seems knows them better than I do myself, and he assures me that I must have a representative individual in view, for else I could have no meaning in the word Cow. Be it so : then this representative must be of some determinate colour, for there is no individual cow without, and I must entreat his lordship to tell me what that colour was, for I protest I don't know. Suppose it red as being the most common : but my man must have a representative too, because else he can have no idea of my orders : perhaps he has been that morning among a drove of welch cattle and takes a black one for his representative. Well then, away he goes to Fair where he sees two fine cows, one brindle and the other white : he judges them excellent beasts, in good milk and well worth the money asked for

for them: so he buys them both and thinks he has done bravely. Now when I come to see them am I to quarrel with the poor fellow for disobeying my orders, or call him blockhead for not understanding so plain an expression as Buy a couple of cows? or if he goes to excuse himself upon being not so learned a man nor so exact in abstract knowledge, should I tell him that the cows being of different colours, it was impossible they could both answer either his idea or mine, because neither of us could know what was meant by the specific term Cow without a representative which must be of some one determinate colour?

4. It is not uncommon for deep thinking persons to draw a confusedness over their thoughts by their refinements which the vulgar escape, and I think it plain that such as we have been arguing against in the last section, have not always a clear and adequate idea of what is meant by that expression To have the idea of a thing. They seem to understand by it such particulars as will arise to the imagination when we take a single object under contemplation in our leisure hours: now I must own that whenever I contemplate a species there does generally, perhaps always, occur an individual before me, with colour, shape, members, cloaths or hide or fins or feathers

feathers thereto belonging, and I hold it right to indulge this custom: for since our abstracts derive all originally from the concrete and are liable to fluctuate and fade in our remembrance, there is no likelier method of renewing and fixing them than by sight or contemplation of the concrete as being the fountain from whence they sprung. But this serves only for restoring ideas known to us before, when we go to new form an idea upon a more perfect model, I never could find a single representative answer the purpose but am forced to employ several.

If I would settle with myself what is justice, I think first perhaps of a man paying money that he has borrowed which is a just action, then with Tully of one selling a house but concealing that there are bugs in it, or of running prohibited goods, or of the gross partiality of a father to some of his children above the rest; and thus by turning over a variety of actions in my thoughts, endeavour to fix a compleat and precise idea of justice, which when gotten, no one of those actions can stand for a full representative afterwards, because destitute of some circumstances which constitute the essence of justice in others.

So if I met with a person that did not know what a triangle was, I might show him

a piece of paper in that form: perhaps the piece is rectangular and he may take that particular into his idea; I may then cut him several other pieces having various angles, and make him observe that they all agree in that circumstance of their having three strait sides lying between three corners: if I found him imagining that a triangle must be made of paper, I might then produce one of wood or ivory, and remark to him that these too agree with the former in the circumstance before-mentioned. Possibly he still thinks a triangle must be something of a size to be turned about commodiously upon a table, when I discover this, it will be expedient to carry him into a three corner field or point to some star in the zenith and another in the horizon, and tell him that they together with the spot of ground we stand upon form an immense triangle.

Thus these contrivances serve gradually to abstract or draw off the ideas constituting triangularity from all others, which any particular substance or space of that form may exhibit: and if I can succeed in making the separation clean and compleat, he will then have the specific idea of a triangle containing neither the idea of rectangular, equilateral, isosceles, nor obtuse, neither softness nor hardness, neither solidity nor empty space,
yet

yet compatible and connectible with any of them.

We have all of us some of those abstract or general ideas which we use in our daily transactions with one another, they answer our occasions nor could the business of life go on without them : but in the hurry of business or currency of common conversation, it is not to be supposed that we have the particular subjects whereto our ideas may belong passing continually in review before us. Or to rise to higher instances, a man used to it may harangue in public for hours together upon the most important matters with great judgment and perspicuity, so as to be readily understood by his audience, many of them perhaps persons of dull capacity and narrow imagination : yet it is not conceivable that he, much less they, should draw along in their thoughts a succession of representative individuals corresponding respectively with all the specific terms employed, in the same rapidity wherewith they were spoken. Whenever his lordship in either house had occasion to mention Prerogative or Liberty of the subject, had he always pictured upon his fancy some particular exertion of royal authority together with the person of the Queen or her minister making that exertion ? or of a private man with a steady determinate countenance expressive

expressive of resolution to disobey an illegal command? And if he had not those pictures, must we pronounce that he did not understand himself, nor had any idea of what he talked of?

5. These abstractions furnish us with another set of things which are not substances: for we say justice is not the same thing as bounty; colour is one thing and sound another; sporting is a different thing from poaching, or poaching signifies quite a different thing when applied to destroying the game and to dressing of eggs; prudence and tranquillity of mind are desirable things; war, famine and pestilence dreadful things; there is such a thing as sincerity, but no such thing as absolute certainty among men. Now it is upon this sort of things only that the dispute turns, whether they are independent, unproduced and necessarily existent: for with regard to substances I believe all Theists now a days agree with the soundest of them in former days, in holding that there is but one deserving those epithets, who therefore was called in greek To On or the Being, and in hebrew Jehovah or the I AM; but that all other substances whatever were created, their primary properties assigned them, their positions, affections, assortments

and relations brought upon them by the provisions of that One or First Cause.

But substances are the only existent things containing in them all other things, which belong to them as modifications, relations and circumstances, begin and end with them, and are so far from being independent on the Almighty, that they depend upon the manner of existing in those substances which depended upon his Will for their existence. For we have seen that the abstract is drawn from the concrete : it is a selection of one or a few ideas exhibited together with others by the concrete ; we may think of it apart, but it cannot exist apart, nor without some substance possessing it. For our idea of a thing is not the thing itself : I may think and reason upon motion, when lying a bed in a still night with every thing quiescent about me ; yet will any body say there would have been such a thing as motion if there had been no movable substances ever in Being ? I can fancy the chairs dancing about the room spontaneously ; but does that give a reality to such a species of movement ? Who will insist there must be a specific existence of Cyclops, Chimeras and black swans, because artists have had so full an idea as to delineate them exactly in prints and paintings ?

But

But men of abstruse learning are led into mistakes upon this article because many of their abstractions are not drawn immediately from substances but from one another, and that by several gradations of new refinements serving as a channel into others still more subtle. Like a wire drawer who takes a little bar of silver, forces it thro' the hole of his engine, and by driving it successively thro' smaller and smaller holes, brings it to a fineness fit for winding round a thread of silk. Therefore forgetting the steps by which they arrived at an abstraction, they discern no source to give it birth but suppose it to have an existence of its own independent on every thing else. Thus the rules of justice are apprehended immutable and unproduced, because you cannot draw them directly from any object before you. If you see a man sitting in a chair you may discern his complexion, his size and all the parts of his human figure, but he exhibits no idea of justice in the whole appearance you have to inspect. Nevertheless let us consider whether the rules of justice do not derive from the contemplation of man, for they relate solely to his dealings with others: if there was no such thing as justice there could be no rules respecting it, if there were no transactions among mankind there could be neither justice nor in-

justice, and if there were no men there could be no such transactions. Therefore justice and the rules of it cannot be older than man, nor perhaps so old, for while Adam lived alone there was no room for justice. But you say there may have been other creatures before him governed by the rules of justice: probably there might and in that case justice was older than man, yet it was not existent before, nor necessarily coeval with the substances capable of, exercising it, who might have lived some time apart before being brought into one another's company.

6. Well but I might have an idea of justice tho' there never had been a race of men to practise it: this I much doubt of, for my ideas are all taken from experience of what I have seen, and if I had never observed a difference in the behaviour of men to one another, I should never have known what justice was. Yet this will not satisfy, for you urge that now I have gotten the idea I should not lose it tho' all the men besides myself were annihilated; and the like idea might subsist elsewhere before there were any creatures to practise it, judgements might be passed and propositions formed concerning it: but there can be no idea of Nothing, therefore justice must have a real existence distinct from every just action and the agent performing

forming it. Why, by this logic I can prove there are Chimeras and black swans, for I have a clear idea of them, can pass judgements and form propositions concerning them, as that the Chimera must be a dangerous creature in any country and might eat up all the black swans: but I cannot have an idea of a Nothing, therefore the Chimera and the black swan have a reality and existence independent of every thing else. So you do not perceive that you have changed the state of the question, you do not indeed change the terms but you change the signification belonging to them: for whereas justice before was understood of something without us whereof we might entertain an idea, it now becomes appropriated to the idea itself which possibly may not be conformable to any thing external. Let us then examine whether such idea can subsist independently on any substance.

I have generally employed the word Idea to stand for that state of our internal organs which is the immediate cause of a perception: in this sense it is nothing more than a particular modification of matter and motion, which cannot subsist unless in a fine texture of material organs capable of taking such modification. But oftentimes Idea denotes the very perception of the mind, and in this

construction can have none other reality than that derived from the mind perceiving ; for there cannot be a perception without a percipient. Thus in all lights wherein we can consider justice it has no claim to independency and separate existence : for whether we conceive it to be something external which we can apprehend, it then depends upon the behaviour of creatures among one another exhibiting it to our apprehension ; or whether we understand it of a corporeal idea, it can be no older than the organizations capable of being modified thereinto ; or whether we take it for a mental idea, it must begin and end with the perception of some mind affected therewith.

Let us now come to the nature of things, and this very expression might convince us that it cannot be necessarily eternal : for substances are acknowledged to have been created, and we have seen that things unsubstantial depend upon them for their existence : then the nature of both cannot be older than the things themselves whereof it is the nature. There could not be a human nature before there were men, nor a nature of justice before there were agents capable of mutual dealings which might be regulated by the rules of justice. But so short an answer will hardly satisfy : we will therefore enquire
more

more minutely into the proper import of the word Nature, which is somewhat difficult to settle because so variable in common use.

For nature is often placed in contradistinction to education, to art, to design, to chance, to miracle: and what is currently ascribed to it upon one occasion, has a different cause assigned upon another. Every country fellow makes the distinction between natural grass and clover, nonsuch or others that are sown, and between the natural produce of the ground and corn which is the effect of cultivation: yet if a man takes a farm it is natural for him to plow, and sow and he depends upon the nature of the soil for the growth and goodness of his crops. Then again in discourses upon commerce, we count the corn and other fruits raised by industry among the natural produce of a country because it is not imported nor manufactured of foreign materials. In distempers some people trust to nature for a cure, others send for a physician in hopes that his skill may throw off a burthen she must have sunk under. Yet when corn is gotten from a field where nature would have yielded nothing but weeds, or a dangerous disease conquered by the cares of a physician, nobody reckons these in the class of supernatural events. So the excrescencies and monstrous productions found in

plants and animals, are sometimes stiled preternatural and sometimes the sports of nature. Therefore nature signifies the properties, powers, relations or affections of the substances whereto we apply it. It is the nature of oaks to bear acorns, that is, the texture of their parts is such as to render them incapable of yielding peaches, apples or any other crop than what they do. It is the nature of mustard to bite the tongue, here the term denotes a relation between the seed and the member, for if the latter had no sensibility the other could not bite. It is the nature of justice to stop the motions of self-love, that is, so far as a man has a sentiment of justice he will shape his measures thereby, although contrary to his private interests or his passions. When we speak of the Divine nature we understand thereby such Attributes and methods of proceeding as we conceive belonging to that first of substances.

This may account for the changeable meaning of the word, because it must unavoidably contain a different set of ideas according to the occasion or particular substances whereto it is applicable. For in speaking of natural grass we regard only the spontaneous powers of the ground which will yield nothing else: on mentioning the natural produce of a country we think of the powers,

powers, opportunities and materials for raising commodities which the inhabitants have within themselves without foreign aid. When we leave a wound or a disease to nature we mean thereby the mechanical circulations and motions of our human body: when we talk of supernatural events we compare them with the powers of all created agents within our knowledge, among which the skill of the physician stands included. Yet whoever believes the reality of those events will not think it contrary to the nature of God to work them, and whoever believes them so contrary will deny the truth of the facts. But sometimes the term Nature does not so much as import one of those unsubstantial things before treated of, as when we say it is the nature of matter to be inert, which is a bare negation of any power to begin motion.

Nature, used alone in the most extensive sense, stands for the whole aggregate of powers we know certainly or seem to know of among substances: but because substances qualified alike perform different operations according to what others they fall into connection with, and we cannot always investigate the causes bringing them together, this gives rise to the idea of Fortune. So that Nature has no more claim to be deemed an agent

agent than Chance: one expresse those operations of substances which are reducible into a system, the other those which are wholly uncertain and can be brought under no rule of observation. Therefore we talk of the stated laws of nature but the courses or mazes of fortune, yet these mazes may sometimes gain an entrance among those stated laws when we have found out a clue to them: for the eclipses and phases of the planets, which were anciently esteemed fortuitous, are now numbered among the regular phenomena of nature; whereas the weather still continues casual, not that we do not acknowledge it to proceed from natural causes, but because no human sagacity can discover those causes nor foresee how they will operate.

Upon the whole it appears that nature is something more abstracted than those unsubstantial things treated of in the preceeding sections, but being still further removed from its original source, is harder to be traced thereto; nevertheless that it must have had a source derived either immediately or by their intervention from substances, and consequently cannot be independent nor have an existence prior to the substances giving it rise. As is implied in those expressions The birth of Nature, and when Chaos is called The womb of
of

of nature and perhaps her grave: which though understood only of physiology, yet metaphysics and ontology, or the nature of Beings, must depend for its eternal or temporary duration upon that of the Beings which are the objects of this science.

8. Nevertheless it will be asked, shall we deny God to have had a perfect knowledge of the nature of things before he created them? I cannot undertake to pronounce peremptorily upon the manner of divine intelligence, having none other conception of intelligence than what I can draw from my own manner of thinking; and I will not presume to say that the thoughts of God must be just such as my thoughts. Therefore if this question were proposed by an angel I should be dumb, expecting that whatever I could say would appear to him the idle roving of one who would needs be talking upon a subject above his comprehension: but since I am discoursing only with men, whose understandings are narrow like my own, the foundations of whose knowledge are similar to those I have to build upon, I may be allowed to think them not so greatly an overmatch as that I should give up the point without an argument.

Now

Now I observe in the first place that the question implies a time wherein God was alone without any creation, but on a sudden began to resolve upon having a universe peopled with perceptive Beings capable of receiving the blessings he would pour forth upon them: which seems to me inconsistent with the principal tenets of the persons I have to deal with. For if God be good, communicative of happiness by the necessity of his nature, and there were an eternal unproduced nature of things rendering one plan of operation more productive of happiness than all others, this must have prompted, I will not say obliged, him to carry that best plan into execution immediately as soon as he was able, that is, from everlasting, for his omnipotence never had a beginning; before which there could be no time of solitude wherein he might contemplate the pre-existent nature of not yet existent things.

I remark next that as in the case of justice taken notice of in § 6, we have now shifted the sense of our term; for this nature antecedent to creation is not a nature of things but the idea of it, and in this ideal state cannot be older than the mind contemplating it. Well but that need not hinder its being eternal because the mind entertaining the idea undoubtedly was so. But how does it appear undoubt-

undoubtedly that such idea was eternally entertained? What Attribute or what expedience shall we assign that should require it? Was it for the Divine solace and amusement while there were no worlds to uphold, no government of Providence to administer? Tis true we can imagine no happiness without some employment either of acting or thinking: but when we presume to talk of the Supreme Being, it becomes us to proceed humbly and reverentially, with a consciousness that our conceptions are all drawn from experience of what has passed among ourselves; and the same experience may evince that everything passing with us is by no means applicable to him. When at any time I am totally debarred from action, I must let my imagination roam upon some scenes occurring thereto, or else the time will pass insipid and irksome: but what ground have I to think the same of God, or that his time must pass insipid and irksome without an ideal nature of things perpetually to engage his attention? So the motive of entertainment affords us no evidence to prove the eternity of such idea: and the motive of goodness yields as little, for what good could redound to the creatures while there were none existent from contemplation of a nature of things by which their fortunes were to be regulated?

But

But you will say it would be blasphemy to imagine the work of creation gone upon in a hurry without mature consideration of all the possibilities wherein it might be effected, and a selection of such method as should appear most proper in wisdom and goodness to be chosen. Here again we judge of the All-perfect by ourselves. When I have some important business to take in hand my thoughts are cloudy and uncertain at first, I deliberate successively upon the several ways wherein I might conduct myself, I compare them together, and it is lucky if after running them over a while in my reflection I can at last discern clearly which is the most probable to answer my purpose. But shall I measure Omniscience by my own scanty model? shall I pronounce that it must study a thousand years before it can hit upon a perfect plan, and bring all the parts to harmonize and join in perfect symmetry with one another? Ought not I rather to believe that when God creates, his acting and his compleat knowledge of the manner most expedient to be followed in acting are co-instantaneous; and that as he creates with a word so he plans with a thought, using length of time or process of operation in neither.

9. Yet if such contemplative solitude could be demonstrated eternal, we could not thence pronounce

pronounce it independent and unproduced, but owing to the Will and pleasure of God, who chose to employ himself that way rather than in the actual exercise of his creative power: for to suppose the contemplation forced upon him involuntarily would be still building with our slender scantlings and judging rashly of his intelligence by our own. We are passive in all our perceptions, they are excited in us by something else, most probably by the modifications of our mental organs. In sensation we know there are external objects operating upon us, and tho' in reflection we do not certainly know what it is that affects us, yet we may know assuredly there can be no affection without an action, nor action without an agent, nor agent which is not a substance: so that in our most retired meditations there is some substance exhibiting the objective ideas we perceive. Now what substance was there to act upon the Almighty before the worlds were made? or what agency, what power of exhibiting objective ideas in an unsubstantial nature of things? Therefore we must conclude that God is purely active in the exercises of his intelligence as well as of his omnipotence, and that his thoughts are not affections raised by some object passing in review before him: altho' this be a manner of thinking far above
our

our conception because beyond all our experience.

Nevertheless to speak as a man, and otherwise we cannot speak, there is no understanding without objects to contemplate, nor any object of knowledge that has not been for ever discerned by the Omniscient: what kind of objects then shall we assign to the Divine intelligence? Must they needs be forms and qualities, genera, species, modes, essences and abstract natures, possibilities of what will never be done, and hypothetic results from imaginary premisses which never were nor ever will be realized? Here too we are misled by the necessities and weaknesses of our own faculties. We have frequent occasion to contemplate, to compare, to assort, to unite, to distinguish, a number of things, more than we can possibly bring together within the compass of our imagination: therefore we make abstractions, which are partial ideas more commodious for our grasp. For we have seen before that the abstract is drawn from the concrete: it is a shred torn off from the substances, needfull enough for convenience of carriage in our shallow vessel. Like the woollen drapers book of patterns which I bring home in my pocket when I would consult my *Serena* and my *Sparkler* upon the colour of a suit, because I cannot carry the whole

whole pieces : for if we went down to the shop and had the cloths themselves spread before us upon the counter, I should never think of calling for the book of patterns. So if I have any considerable purpose to effect and the sure means of compleating it happen by great chance to occur at first view, I never trouble my head with the possibilities of other measures that might be taken, nor stand to make hypotheses of what would ensue had circumstances been different from those I find. Shall we then fancy those shifts necessary for the Author of nature and all comprehended therein, because they are necessary for us imperfect creatures ?

He has a full view of all the men upon earth, of all that ever were or ever shall be, so has no use for the specific idea of man : he knows all the actions of free agents, past, present and to come, so has no need of an abstract idea of justice to pass a judgement upon them : he discerns distinctly all the substances ever created, their operations and affections, so wants not an unsubstantial nature of things for his guidance in the management of them. Therefore with submission and reverence be it spoken, there seems a truer regard for his glory in believing that he discerns the abstract solely in the concrete produced or to be produced into Being by his

own power, has no specific ideas or abstractions of forms and essences detached from their substances, nor ever contemplates an unsubstantial nature of things, nor thinks of possibilities never to be produced into act, nor frames hypothetic propositions of what would happen if such or such measures were to be taken: for all these are expedients rendered necessary by our infirmities, which we can with no colour of reason ascribe to him. It is indeed excusable, because unavoidable, upon many occasions to speak of his proceedings in a manner conformable to our own, and even to attribute to him human passions and affections, such as favour, detestation, resentment, jealousy, repentance, fondness for glory, pleasure at our obedience or sollicitude for our welfare; of doing him service, of grieving his holy spirit, of our sincere zealous resolutions and hearty praises casting up a sweet smelling favour before him: but we ought to remember that these expressions are not adequate to the subject nor descriptive of his essence, but indulgencies only granted in condescension to our infirmity which has none but groveling ideas to apply to the sublimest of objects.

10. Still there may remain a suspicion of something antecedent, not only directive of intelligence but even restrictive of omnipotence: for

for no Will can make a thing be apprehended otherwise than it appears nor understand it different from what it is ; and there are absolute impossibilities, as that two and two should make five, that the angles of a triangle should not be equal to two right ones, that an agent should at the same time be free and impeccable. And here I may call in aid the noble lord before cited who declares that these propositions are identical, carrying a show of something profound but really expressive of nothing : for to understand a thing otherwise than it is would be not to understand it, therefore to tell me I cannot do so is the same as saying I cannot be ignorant of it when I do understand it ; but in the case of the Supreme Being he directs his own intelligence, for he determines how he shall understand a thing by making it what it is.

Then the necessity urged of two and two making four carries the face of an operation performed by two and two to produce the new Being Four, together with some superior force restraining them from producing any thing else, and indeed Product is the technical term among arithmeticians for the sum found by multiplication : whereas two and two were already the same thing with four before our multiplying them together, and differ only in idea according as we con-

sider them separated or united. If I had two guineas in my pocket and some body pays me two, I now have four; but the guineas were four while in different hands, and you might have truly said there were four guineas in the room before the payment: so that to say it is impossible two and two should make five, is the same as saying they cannot be any thing else than what they are.

In like manner the essence of a triangle contains two particulars, The having three angles, and The quantity of their widths added together which is equal to two right angles: for you might easily draw lines upon paper making three angles greater or less than two right ones, but then those lines will not enclose a space and consequently be no triangle. The former of these particulars is as obvious as that twice two are four, but the latter is unknown to many persons; and those who do know it were taught by long process of demonstration, which demonstration was only a new discovery to them of what was really contained in the essence of the subject. Therefore to urge, that it is impossible for any power to make the angles of a triangle unequal to two right ones, amounts to nothing more than that no power can form a triangle which shall be no triangle: for tho' the word Impossible makes a show of some
limitation

limitation by antecedent causes confining the power to one particular manner of exertion, yet it is here a delusive sound without a meaning. Who would think it a limitation upon his powers, to have it proved impossible for him to do a thing that shall be quite different from what he does? or lament at lying under controul of an uncreated necessity, because he cannot write a letter without writing nor walk across the room without walking? For my part I should esteem it rather a mark of inability and subjection if when I were tired of sitting still, it were possible that I might walk ever so fast and yet continue all the while in the sedentary posture become irksome to me.

The same answer will do for the impossibility of a free agent being impeccable. Those who battle most strenuously for this tenet are cloudy and fluctuating in their conceptions at first, but if after much squabbling and shifting ground you can dispell the clouds and dust they raise, so as to bring them to some determinate steady sense of their words, you will always find them meaning the same thing by Free agency and Peccability: so their assertion becomes meerly identical, Whatever is peccable must be peccable; or as they affect hypothetical propositions, If God will give a creature peccability he must

make him peccable, for it is not in the nature of things to do otherwise. Now to my apprehension free agency and peccability are different: freedom perhaps includes a power of doing wrong, but I understand by peccability a liableness to do wrong, which two I conceive not only distinguishable in idea but separable in fact, and think I find some few instances in myself of their being actually separated. I seem to have full liberty to burn my wig whenever there is fire or candle near me, yet while I can keep my senses and avoid the frenzy of election or party bumpers I apprehend myself under no hazard of such an idle freak. And I am so far from believing God unable to deliver me totally from my peccability without depriving me of my freedom that I have hope he will actually do it for myself in particular, and for countless multitudes of my fellow creatures, in some future stage of our existence whereto he is now preparing us by his laws of nature and courses of Providence in this sublunary stage.

11. Nevertheless supposing an unalterable nature of things, this can be no sure ground of our reasonings, because we can never be sure of apprehending it exactly: for such nature must continue always one and the same, but our abstract ideas notoriously fluctuate in our thoughts and vary from those of other people.

people. We have all of us some idea of justice, yet are perpetually doubtfull whether particular actions co-incide therewith or not: and no man can fix so perfect an idea of that virtue as that he may not afterwards find reason to add or relax therefrom. And among various persons how discordant are their notions of justice, of honour, of public spirit and all other abstract ideas?

Notwithstanding all the cares I have bestowed upon metaphysics and abstraction I find I have not gotten the true idea of perjury; for if I took a transfer of five hundred India to vote at an election and give it back again upon the opening, and on going to the ballot should swear the said stock was my own property and my name not used in trust for any other, I should think myself guilty of perjury: or if I had a thousand and lent half of it to a friend upon the like terms, I should think this a subornation of perjury. But there are much wiser people, because better skilled in the only valuable knowledge, the art of getting money, who see there is nothing to reproach oneself for in all this. And I suppose the same wise people would perceive, tho' I cannot, that there is no harm in swearing a man's life away, provided one could get a swinging sum or serve a friend or ruin a party by so doing. I dare not presume to argue

the case with them, for they would only laugh at my simplicity or cry me down for my superstition. And here I am not so simple as to be insensible of their wisdom in employing this kind of logic : for a laugh and an outcry have the same effect upon the rational faculties as stopping one's ears has upon that bodily sense ; and I can clearly discern that the wisest way can be taken in the nature of things for defending some opinions, is to stop one's ears against whatever can be said in opposition to them.

12. Again if there were an abstract nature of things having a reality separate from the things themselves, so much of it as does not affect the substances wherewith we have concern would be needless to be known by us. What should we be the better or the wiser for knowing ever so accurately the nature of Chimeras, Cyclops or flying Dragons, since no such creatures will ever fall in our way ? or for understanding the abstract foundations of prudence and good policy among Sylphs and Gnomes which have no existence elsewhere than in imagination ? Neither is it practicable, if it were desirable, for us to frame an idea of such unoperating nature or any single particular belonging to it : for our ideal knowledge all comes from experience, our most refined speculations are nothing more

more than recollections of what has been deposited in our memory by the operation of substances, being either external objects or the modifications of our mental organs. We may compound, assort, disunite, and recall them in another order or other company than they entered; we may join things which never appeared together; we may think of a cause and its remote effect without that process of operation by which it has always worked it, or annex the idea of a cause to effects it does not bring forth, and this way can make fantastical compositions and romantic events unlike to any thing that nature has ever produced: yet still the materials are all picked out from scenes we have actually known exhibited. I have seen women, horses, birds of various plumage, and fish, and by collecting several parts of these into one assemblage, like flowers tied in a nosegay, can easily make up that whimsical figure with which Horace begins his art of poetry. We have known admirals hang out signals and by them govern the motions of a fleet: tis but slipping out of mind the captains and crews obeying the signals, and we shall have the signals themselves remaining for the immediate cause of the movements in the ships; by which example we may learn to fancy a fairy raising a magnificent palace by a stroke of her wand.

I have seen different animals, can recall one of them to mind and immediately discard it by substituting another in its room; by which power I could easily fancy an old witch turning herself into a tabby cat. And it is observable that conjurors of all sorts use certain mysterious words and gestures whereby they teach imagination to join causes with effects not belonging to them: so that magic, witchcraft and conjuration, may be called the habit of culling causes and effects well known in experience, but connecting them together in a manner nature never did.

Nor is it unlikely that errors in philosophy should spring from the same source. Lucretius builds his theory upon the observation of motes in a sun beam, which in general fall perpendicularly, but many of them decline from their line of descent at uncertain times in various and uncertain directions; never reflecting what experience might have informed him, that every little motion of the air will give an impulse to those light bodies: so by this lucky omission he struck out his ingenious contrivance for making a world by chance. Our abstract ideas of species, forms, essences, powers, modes, relations and natures, are only remembrances of what we have noticed in substances or their operations: but the notice touching upon various points of
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of the same object at different times and in different persons, and imagination being too scanty to contain all the stores of our remembrance, but having her scenes composed of such particulars as occur from time to time spontaneously or can be drawn up by recollection, 'tis no wonder that our notions are imperfect, unstable, perpetually varying among themselves and from those of one another. Our moral ideas all bear an ultimate reference to satisfaction or happiness, and have for their object such sentiments of the mind as, either by themselves or by the actions they prompt to, make an encrease or diminution of happiness. And hence it comes that they are so frequently discordant among mankind and fluctuating in each man: for the efficacy of a particular sentiment, and the consequences of an action, being infinitely various according to situations and circumstances, it is very difficult, perhaps impossible, to fix the essence of justice, of honour, of piety, of holiness, and all others of the moral class, so accurately as that something yet unobserved or slipped out of mind shall not cause an alteration of shape or colour therein. Therefore those ideal natures and essences are unfit to be taken for the basis of knowledge or first principles of action: they are good and needfull directions for our conduct both
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in acting and reasoning, the sole means of making past experience profitable, but so far from being eternal, unproduced and unalterable, that they were the offspring of observation upon substances and operations we have known; and are apt to change, like stale meat, so far as to become unwholesome, if locked up long in the speculations of the closet. They must be frequently brought out into the air of the world, applied to the occurrences passing there, and continual endeavours used by familiar example, comparison, distinction, fresh observation and supposition of cases likely to happen, so to fix their figures upon the memory as that there may be nothing defective or superfluous, and they may rise uniform and fleshy every time they make their appearance in the imagination.

13. The doctrine of an uncreated nature of things seems to have gathered strength from a notion of its necessity to direct the choice of the Almighty in his creation: for choice must be founded on the discernment of one thing being preferable to another, which discernment does not make the preference, it only finds a preference subsisting before in the object contemplated. But this necessity will appear none when we reflect that, as already hinted in the above cited

§ 71. of the last chapter, many things must have passed in the creation for which no direction could be had from an antecedent nature of things. Supposing the characters, endowments and offices of all perceptive Beings ascertained by such nature, which is more than I can pretend to say that they were, yet how can that nature allot particular persons to the several parts and offices it had made requisite in the universe? What if there must be an Archangel to lead forth the hosts of the Lord to battle, and such a reptile as Ned Search to puzzle his brains with dry speculations that nobody heeds, why was it necessary that Michael must be the Archangel and I the reptile? Tis true that in my present condition I am utterly unfit to cope with the arch rebell, for he would pinch me to nothing with a gripe of his iron claw, and this is owing to the infirmity of that nature which God has given me: but what was Michael better than me before either of us were created? both were then non-entities, undistinguishable nothings, capable of neither fitness nor unfitness for any office whatever. Then what antecedent necessity should so constrain omnipotence as that God might not have created me to the powers and intelligence of the Archangel and made Michael the weak and sinfull son of Adam?

Adam? The plan of universal Providence would still have gone on as it does: Satan would still have been overthrown and the same chapters still have been scribbled. We may think it requisite there should be successive generations of men from the formation of this earth to its final dissolution, but what was there in the nature of things to make it requisite that I and my cotemporaries should be living just now and not have been produced into Being among the antediluvians or reserved for some future century? Had their persons, with whom we had then exchanged lots, been born in our time with our natural talents, received our education and consoled with our company, they would have performed their parts just as we have done, and the course of human affairs would have been nothing different.

Yet why was it necessary there must be an endless variety of creatures with continual gradations of power, intelligence and office among them? was it impossible they could all have been made equal and alike? What can we see in the antecedent nature of things to make it indispensably requisite that there should be Archangels and reptiles, patriarchal simplicity and modern refinements? What higher cause can we assign for these things than

than the Will and good pleasure of the Creator?

If there be any rule of direction which we cannot separate from our idea of God, it is that of goodness; for we say that God is good by the necessity of his nature: but goodness respects only the happiness bestowed and production of creatures capable of being made happy; it has no concern with the manner of making them happy; so long as the same portion of blessing is distributed it gives no preference to one particular method of distribution rather than another. What previous fitness of things do we discover, or what in the nature of goodness, that should hinder but that God might have given us the measure of happiness designed by his own continued act without the intervention of second causes? was he not able, or would it have been laborious and troublesome to have done so? In this case the creatures would have wanted no faculty of activity, for the perceptive alone would have sufficed; a corporeal world to supply them with materials of enjoyment had been needless, as likewise those wonderful courses of Providence producing order therein, nor could there have been room for wisdom to display herself. For the very essence of wisdom lies in the nice adjustment of causes among one another and to their destined

tined effects, so that an infinite variety of them shall, by many intricate channels and discordant operations, bring forth the exact series of events projected. What is done by dint of power, requires no wisdom to perform it. If I have a bowl in my hand and want it to touch the jack at tother end of the green, the shortest way would be to carry it thither, but then there is no skill in doing this: the skill lies in rolling it along the ground so that, by taking a compass over several inequalities of the turf, it shall rest at last just in the spot I would have it. Or if there were blocks in the way that it could not reach the mark unless by a passage of twenty angles made by touching upon so many bowls, he that could make a sure cast under these circumstances would show a most surprizing skill. Why then do we take so much trouble in rolling our bowls when we might carry them easier? The answer is obvious: for our diversion, or perhaps to show our dexterity to some by-stander. But shall we say that God put his host of second causes in act, as we go to a game at bowls, for amusement? or was it to show what he could do?

It may indeed be thought an end worthy ascribing to him, to manifest his glory and his wisdom to the creatures, but this is because he has so constituted some of his creatures

as that the contemplation of his glory and admiration of his wisdom becomes a principal channel of their happiness : yet he has provided enjoyments for multitudes of creatures without giving them any capacity of knowing him or his works, and of that species which he has endued with such capacity, there are many to whom the necessary occupations of that station wherein he has placed them, the turbulence of their passions and continual action of sensible objects around them, has rendered it impracticable to exercise their faculties in the extent whereof they are capable. Thus what grounds there are for the display of glory must be looked for in the constitution and nature given to the creatures on calling them forth into Being, not in any thing prior to their creation : nor can we devise any previous necessity nor eternal fitness that should determine him to satisfy the demands of goodness by the long-spun contrivances of wisdom, rather than by the direct operations of power. Since then, if we will needs judge of the Creator by our own ideas, there appears to have been many particulars attending the creation, for which we can form no idea of any direction to be had from a pre-existent abstract nature of things, we must acknowledge that in those particulars he could and did proceed without it, and

from thence may conclude that he might do the same in all others belonging to his work.

14. Even goodness, that most important of all the Attributes to us, seems ascribed too hastily by many to such an abstract nature, for they say that God is good by the necessity of his nature: which expression I have used just now after their example, tho' without a full understanding of the terms, for to my apprehension they imply a necessity casting goodness upon him involuntarily or making it requisite for him to act upon that principle; but for my part I will not pretend to say how it comes that he is good nor assign a cause of his being so. Men are good because it is their duty, because it will obtain them his favour, because they think it their truest interest, because they have been led into it by good company, because it is soothing to their reflection and gratefull to their moral sense: but I can ascribe none of those motives, nor any other conceivable by me, to the Almighty.

Goodness, you will urge, is an excellence, and all excellencies must centre in him. Let us beware that we do not slide back again into the notion of things abstract and unsubstantial subsisting independently on their substances: for what are we to understand by Excellence? The idea results from comparison

rison, most frequently among us from a comparison of persons; we call a man excellent in his way when he far surpasses others: in this sense we may say without blasphemy that the excellence of God sprung from his creation, for a sole Being can have no excellence because it has nothing to excell. Or if you will apply the term you might with equal propriety apply its contrary, for while the sole he was the lowest as well as the most excellent of Beings. Therefore when he had made a multitude of creatures far inferior to himself, then it was he began to be the most excellent.

In the other sense of excellence it rests upon a comparison of things, those being judged the most excellent which are most advantageous or conduce to the most excellent purposes, that is, such as yield the largest income of happiness. 'Tis true goodness placed in this light must appear the highest excellence, because that alone gives us an interest in omnipotence, omniscience and infinite wisdom, which without it would become objects of meer speculation or perhaps of dread and horror. But then it is an excellence relatively to us, and if we think to encrease it by our prayers, oblations and rectitude of conduct, we shall do well as being the most excellent purpose we can drive at: yet this does not

prove it an excellence to him nor fixed upon him by the necessity of his nature. If a man have talents and a disposition of mind highly beneficial to the public, tho' productive of nothing but incessant cares and trouble to himself, we think him an excellent person, and he may think it himself an excellent possession, and why? either because of the satisfaction of mind redounding therefrom, or more rationally because it is every man's truest interest to do the most good he can. For in that only nature of things which lies within our knowledge, the motive of every action regards ultimately some benefit of the agent, either real or fancied; and if there be another nature we know nothing of, we can never take upon us to pronounce what it does or does not require: the known nature of agency manifestly does not render an Attribute of goodness necessary, for what joy, what advantage could accrue to the Almighty from effecting his gracious purpose of making creatures to be happy? or how was it better or more excellent for him to be good than to be evil?

But it will be asked, can I imagine a Deity otherwise than good? I frankly own that I cannot, because I feel so many effects of bounty in myself, and see so many blessings poured daily among the creatures on all sides
around

around me, that I cannot imagine them proceeding from any other than a beneficent gracious and indulgent power. Thus I discover the cause by the effects and rest contented in the discovery without wanting or pretending to look further for a cause of that cause, which I esteem the First, thinking myself happy there is such a one from under whose influence I can never be removed. Nor is my method different with respect to the other Attributes and even the Being of a God, for all which I could never yet enter into the force of arguments a priori. I see there is a world, and my reason convinces me it could not exist without a Creator, therefore there is one. I know from experience of works I have seen performed, that the world could not be made without power, and can discern nothing that should limit or obstruct that power, therefore the Creator is omnipotent. In this manner I go on investigating the other Attributes by comparison of causes and effects: if at any time I try to throw aside all my experience together with the observations and theorems stored in mind therefrom, I find nothing but obscurity whereon I can neither judge nor reason nor argue.

15. What then! do we represent God as arbitrary, that it is wholly uncertain in what manner he will deal with us, that he follows

none other guidance in his proceedings than meer Will and pleasure? Far be it from me to draw this conclusion, nor do I think the premisses laid down above will bear it. For arbitrary proceeding is acting with no regard to the condition of the subjects acted upon, and such action must always be uncertain; but without an antecedent uncreated nature of things I apprehend God does not want a guidance for his proceedings in the subsequent nature given to his substances on making them; and that he follows invariably those rules which he had prescribed to himself by the creation, which last opinion I gather from his immutability.

Yet neither can I venture to pronounce him immutable by the necessity of his nature, for I can see nothing previous that should make it necessary, but infer it from the steady regularity observable in his laws of visible nature and course of events respecting mankind, and from the absence of all conceivable causes which might work a change in him. Men are changeable either from ignorance, which leaves room for new lights perpetually to cast a new appearance of things upon their judgement; or from imbecillity, rendering them liable to be hurried to and fro against their judgement by the spontaneous and uncertain impulse of their passions: and I have
observed

observed that in proportion as they can get rid of their ignorance and imbecillity, they grow more and more uniform and steady in their sentiments and conduct. Therefore being fully assured those two causes are absent from God, I see no shadow of probability for their effects: nor can entertain a suspicion that he may be good and provident to-day but cruel or regardless of us to-morrow: that at one time he could look forth upon the works which he had made and behold they were very good, conformable to his liking; but at some subsequent season he might look forth again and behold they were stark nought, displeasing and odious in his sight: that he should choose a plan of operation persevering in it for successive ages until at length he changed his mind, departed from his plan and pursued another diametrically opposite.

Nevertheless we must take care to settle the proper idea of immutability, which is not inconsistent with a variety of action, provided the whole scheme of action be laid out upon one plan: for we do not pronounce a man changeable and uncertain because he sometimes goes to bed and sometimes gets up, sometimes sits down to eat and sometimes rises to labour, or studies and uses exercise, meditates alone and diverts himself among his friends at different times, if in all those

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changes of action he still holds on the same tenor of conduct and acts upon the same principles throughout. So the measures of universal government are immutable altho' the dispensations made by it are various, sometimes building up and sometimes pulling down, sometimes cherishing with salubrious influences and sometimes destroying with pestilence and famine; altho' barbarism and good polity by turns overspread the several countries of the earth; altho' at times we are in pleasure or pain, in hope or under dejection, gladdened with success or vexed with disappointment. For these are various parts making up the symmetry of one uniform plan which never varies from itself: so that the universe continues always the same but the members of it fluctuate, perpetually changing condition with one another.

16. 'Tis this fluctuation among the members and individuals of an immutable Whole, that occasions so many mistakes in the doctrine of final causes; for our unpiercing optics reaching a very little way into the chain of events around us, we frequently take the means for the end and deceive ourselves in their bearings and tendencies: but if we could discern the final causes as they grow in order from one another, there would be no surer foundation whereon to build our reasonings,

ings, nor could there be a safer measure of our conduct than to exert our little powers in co-operating with them. Those final causes are best sought out by a diligent examination into the nature of things, that is, of substances, their qualities, mutual relations and operations, falling within the compass of our notice: whose natures must of course have continuance in proportion to that of the subject whereof they are predicated. That there is a nature of the British constitution nobody will deny, nor that it requires the attention of every one who would strike out any measures of sound policy among us, for none that are contrary thereto can succeed: but this nature was so far from being eternal and unchangeable, that fifteen hundred years ago, before there was a British constitution, it had no Being, so could require nothing and direct to nothing: and a little smattering in English history will manifest, that it has received many changes from the Saxon heptarchy to the present flourishing condition of our American colonies. The absorption of six kingdoms by the seventh, the introduction of Papal authority, the Norman conquest, the wars of the Barons, the breaking of their power, the reformation, the growth of commerce and naval strength, the Revolution, the very recent discovery of representation being con-

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fin'd to persons having some interest in elections, have each of them given us a different nature.

Nevertheless there may be natures eternal if the substances whereon they depend were so; and unchangeable tho' the substances fluctuate into different sorts of creatures, provided others perpetually succeed in their places: for the noble ally whom I have called to my assistance in this chapter will concur with me in maintaining a distinction between eternal and independent or uncreated. We do not deny that God might have created Beings from everlasting capable of right and wrong in their dealings among one another, in which case the fundamental rules of justice were eternal and immutable. What tho' there be evident marks of generation in this earth: possibly the universe never was without a race of men in some dirty habitation or other, and then human nature with all the abstractions belonging to it was eternal. Nor shall I scruple to admit that God has regard to those natures, making his dispensations conformable thereto, so that we may stile them his guidance: but then it is in the government only, not the creation of the world whereof they were the production and consequently could not be the direction. We therefore having nothing better than those natures to
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make the basis of our reasonings, it would be an unwarrantable presumption in us to pronounce any thing confidently concerning creation, the manner or causes of it; for we never had experience of a creation or any thing previous or preparatory to it, so can have no ground whereon to build an hypothesis. 'Tis enough, and a great matter too, for us if we can discern how things are constituted; for from thence, as from the only source we have access to, may be gathered so much knowledge of the Divine nature as is needfull or possible for us to attain.

17. I should not have been so copious or perhaps tedious upon this abstruse subject, but that I apprehend it of great importance to such as push their thoughts beyond the common extent: for it is of little avail to the vulgar, who seek for nothing further than the Will and good pleasure of God to account for the constitutions of things, the course of events befalling among them, the rules of duty or obligations to moral conduct; and in this instance are wiser than the speculative. But a trust in God is the grand corner stone of all Religion, and of all our hopes beyond what this present sublunary scene of affairs can afford: therefore it is of the highest moment to every person to take care that this stone lies firm upon solid ground, and while
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it seems to press close thereon, it do not indeed take its support from some side-props which keep it hollow. We may laudably search into visible nature to find what is the Will of God, for we may learn something of it from his works; but if when so found, our dependence rests upon any thing else whether in heaven above or earth below, in the wilds of abstraction or a divine nature subsisting independently on that Will, we shall find it fail us in time of need, how fair soever it may promise during the enthusiasm of speculative discoveries. For this enthusiasm, like the heat of argument, will often give a colour of demonstration to meer plausible appearances, so beguiling the judgement as to make men mistake their own sentiments and perceive not the real ground whereon their persuasions stand. They think themselves actuated by a zeal for the divine glory in maintaining that God is good and just and wise and holy by the necessity of his nature; which notion is really suggested by a secret mistrust of him. They apprehend their fortunes unsafe in his hands; they feel uneasy at the thought of lying under his absolute dominion; they suspect he may deal arbitrarily, unjustly and unkindly by them; so they want some barrier against the dangers of unlimited prerogative, which barrier they suppose

pose to be had in the antecedent, uncreated, unalterable nature of things keeping him perpetually in order.

But this is a novel doctrine unknown to the foundest of ancient writers either sacred or prophane: Pythagoras taught that things were established, the powers of nature and course of events ascertained, by the oath of Jove: the Scriptures speak of a covenant of God fixing the laws of nature, so that day and night, seed time and harvest, should never fail; and represent even the supernatural interpositions therein recorded as made in consequence of the oath sworn unto David, and the eternal purpose of God before the foundations of the world. Now an oath and a covenant are free and voluntary acts, where there is no higher authority to require the one nor valuable consideration given to make the other expedient: therefore those could be only figurative expressions of the Divine immutability, yet were they thought sufficient securities without wishing or seeking for anything further to enforce their performance. Wherefore prudence should incline us to enure our minds to place their confidence upon this sole stable bottom, and to satisfy ourselves of its solidity by frequent impartial examination: for whatever better support we may flatter our imagination with
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in the fondness of refinement, when distress or an approaching dissolution threatens, the fondness will subside, our support be withdrawn, and we shall remain utterly at a loss where to find another.

18. If we are fully assured that God is good and that he will always continue so, what more can we desire for our dependence? what should we be the better if we could know why he must be good? or what addition would it make to our security unless we entertained a suspicion of the other two? Those two points then it behoves us to take for the principal objects of our attention, examining impartially what evidences there are to convince our judgement of their truth; and then by frequent contemplation of such evidences, so to inculcate the result upon our minds that it may grow into an habitual steady persuasion rising spontaneously to the thought in full strength and colour whenever needfull. Actual goodness is discerned by the preponderancy of enjoyments above the uneasinesses open to our observance, and the means of preservation, support, accommodation, relief and comfort amply provided around: but then we must take care to distinguish between goodness and fondness or a compliance with every sudden humour, nor confine our view to ourselves alone or our situation

tuation in the present moment which may happen to contain nothing of enjoyment within its compass. And the continuance of goodness may be learned from the consideration that mutability springs always from defect or weakness; it is owing to something we did not think of before, or some unforeseen desire we cannot resist: still remembering that very different strokes may compose a uniform plan and a variety of dispensations be consistent with an invariableness of design.

Nor is there a small confirmation of those points to be drawn from the concurrence of all mankind, for an opinion universally received may well be presumed standing upon solid grounds although the steps whereby it grew from thence should be utterly forgotten. But there is nobody to whose ears and understanding the very suggestion of an evil or a changeable Deity would not be shocking: and this alone gives rise to our perplexities upon the origin of evil. For if we could believe a mixture of beneficence and unkindness in the Almighty, nothing would be easier than to account for whatever happens contrary to our liking from the latter: when distress falls upon us the answer would be ready, it is an unfavourable season wherein he chances to be out of humour with us.

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But no man will hear such answers: therefore many devices have been framed to solve the difficulty another way, by the mechanical action of matter, the imperfection of created Being, the gradation of stages among the creatures; some have subjected God to an eternal nature of things rendring it impossible for him to give unmingled happiness, others represent him casting the power out of his own hands by a freewill of indifference given to men, which he cannot controul without destroying. The three first appear to me secondary, not original, causes of evil; and for the two last I can find no proof of their being fact. For my part I can neither see, nor find a use in seeing, any higher origin of things than the Will and pleasure of the Creator in making them; if there be a higher I am sensible my faculties can never reach it, and so far as I can discover how things are constituted, I may depend upon their being administred conformably thereto, and my own expectations will be ascertained.

Therefore I have recommended in CHAP. 18, to consider God under two characters, as Creator and as Governor of the world. In the latter only we may discern the grounds of his proceedings, and reason upon the doctrine of final causes: in the former it is not our business to examine why but what he has

has done. If I am asked why the world was established in wisdom and goodness, second causes employed, the perceptions of spirit made dependent on the actions of matter, and a sprinkling of evil rendered necessary; why there was a gradation of creatures, an interruption in the enjoyments allotted them and a peccability in man; I have none other answer for all such questions than because it was the Will and good pleasure of the Creator so to order. But on observing the manner wherein things are constituted, I find the perceptive creatures endowed with activity whereby they are to help themselves to the enjoyments put within their power, that the apprehension of evil has as great a share in the exertion of activity as the desire of good, that since, as observed before, our knowledge of objects lies in the discernment of their differences, there would be no sense of good unless by comparison with its contrast; for it is a common saying that we know not the value of blessings until they are taken from us, and the appellation of a tree of knowledge of good and evil implies that Adam did not understand what good was before he had experience of evil, therefore there must be some actual evil interspersed to raise the apprehension of danger, but a very small proportion will suffice for that purpose. This

establishment I regard as the oath or covenant of the Creator, and by a figurative expression denoting the Divine immutability, may call it an obligation binding upon God in his character of Governor to adhere inviolably thereto.

Thus there is a nature of things which our universal Governor takes for his continual guidance, not independent nor uncreated; antecedent indeed to the measures he takes, but subsequent to the creation, dependent thereon and created therewith. As much of this nature as we can discern, so much we may know concerning his future proceedings: and this is the only evidence human reason can produce for auguring what shall befall us beyond the extent of this present life. Hence likewise we may gather that there is a final cause whereon his views constantly terminate, namely, the happiness of the creatures, to be pursued by such methods as their natures and the circumstances attending them render necessary: which seem to require a dispensation of evil, but in no proportion to the good and made for sake of the good, with a provident care that no more should be permitted than requisite, and that every evil be attended with a far greater profit redundant therefrom. These surely are sufficient grounds of contentment, and of such expectations as
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we are warranted to entertain, provided they be deeply imprinted upon the mind. I only wish I could gain as full an unfading persuasion of them in my imagination as I have a clear conviction upon my understanding: they would overpower many distresses and alleviate all others, so long as I could hold them steadily in contemplation.

19. Another benefit which may chance to accrue from the dissertation carried on in the foregoing sections is, that it may help towards introducing a greater sobriety and soundness into our reasonings upon moral essences, and make men readier to receive mutual improvement or find an issue to disputes in their conferences among one another. For when having gotten a strong persuasion of some point which they do not remember ever to have doubted of, nor from what premisses or by what process of argumentation they were brought to entertain it, they presently pronounce it an unproduced, eternal, immutable truth, and think their assent the effect of an intuitive knowledge, which will always force assent upon a bare inspection. For tho' there may be persons who dissent from this truth, this they say proceeds from the films of error overclouding the sight, or the bias of prejudice not suffering the mental eye to look steddily upon its proper point; for essen-

tial truths must always be acknowledged as soon as seen and understood. Hence they come by the discernment of many things right in themselves and laudable in themselves whose merits must never be questioned: because as in law there is no averring against a record, so in metaphysics there is no excepting against an essential truth intuitively discerned, nor can any circumstance render that wrong which was right in itself.

But since it happens that mens intuitions vary greatly, and they often discern the same truth in very different shapes and colours, when two of these intuitive speculatists meet, there is no room for sober argumentation between them, they can only charge one another with films and bias, blindness and obstinacy, and all must proceed in positiveness, clamour and acrimony. Whereas could they be made sensible that, tho' there were an uncreated nature of things, we have not eyes to see it, but all our abstractions are only partial appearances drawn off from the substances we have been conversant amongst and their operations, they would then perceive that nothing is right in itself or laudable in itself, but those expressions are applied to such dictates of the moral sense and established rules as ought to be taken for first principles of conduct

conduct and sentiment by the generality who cannot trace them to their foundations ; nevertheless a foundation they have, and were made laudable and right by their tendency, nearly or remotely, to the interests of mankind. This would open a door to sober enquiry for discovering the nature of moral obligations from the nature of man and so much of the nature of God as lies manifested in his works ; rectifying one another's misapprehensions or oversights by examination of what conduces most largely to the general or private happiness, and by what several means it operates thereto.

And there are other persons to whom the like considerations might prove serviceable if they would heed them : for our godly and gifted wholesale dealers in lectures mimic the metaphysician without knowing it. Their system, like his, lies altogether in abstract essences and things unsubstantial, such as derivative wickedness, satisfaction to justice, the price paid for the ransom of sin, and the like. With them justification, sanctification and imputed merit, are something that may be drawn up by faith, as water by a pump : grace is an unsubstantial thing transferable from one substance to another, capable of being contained and conveyed in material elements. Thus, like the conjuror, they join the cause

with a very remote effect or with effects not producible by it, and thereby turn religion into a kind of magic and charm. But of those terms some were figurative, of common currency among the Jews, which cannot remain intelligible now unless translated into a language familiar among ourselves: and to find a rational sense in any of them, recourse must be had to the nature of perceptive Beings, the connection between the several members of the creation and several stages of existence to be passed thro', the nature of man, the rational and sensitive faculties, the great importance of a well rectified imagination, the efficacy of forms, ceremonies, visible objects and authority, to give a different cast and tenour to this faculty.

Nor are the generality among us wholly without their abstract essences and unsubstantial Beings: for what else is that nobility of blood supposed to run in the veins from father to son, exerting itself naturally in grandeur of sentiments? or that liberty called the birth right of every Englishman, which he sucks in with his milk, or draws with his first vital air? But nobility of birth is nothing more than the advantages enjoyed from very infancy of a noble education, noble examples and the conversation of noble company, together with the respect paid by the world restraining

straining from such meanesses as might endanger the loss of it: for if the young lord be suffered to consort early among huntsmen, gamesters and jockeys, the blood will be found ignoble in his veins. And if we take our notion of liberty from intuitive knowledge without examination by a reference to public order and public happiness, we shall never be able to distinguish ill nature, envy, petulance and licentiousness, from that spirit of liberty for which we of these countries so justly value ourselves.

C H A P. XXV.

P R O V I D E N C E.

IN my general introduction I compared the niceties of abstract learning to Achilles's spear which was sometimes employed to cure the wounds itself had given. It is this service I have attempted to draw from them throughout the preceeding chapter which, as there hinted, was needless for the unhurt, but intended solely for the relief of such as have been stunned with a blow of the spear, in hopes of allaying the giddiness and confu-

sion of thought thrown upon them thereby. If my endeavours should prove effectual for dispelling the perplexities concerning the origin of evil, the absolute eternity of uncreated essences and things unsubstantial, I expect none other benefit than that the healed will accompany me as undisturbedly as the unwounded along our future progress in the examination of the phenomena before us, and trying from thence to investigate that nature of things which was the work of God, not his superior, and which is the oath he has sworn and covenant he has established for the perpetual direction of his conduct in the administration of his immense kingdom the Universe.

We have already seen that the primary properties of substances are few, but that the great variety of phenomena, which nature exhibits to our view, arises from secondary qualities resulting from composition. It is now, and has been ever since the time of Thales, the received opinion among naturalists that all matter is homogeneous, and that the diversities we find amongst it are owing to the various forms and combinations whereinto it is assorted. The face of the earth apparently derives its features from the shape whereinto it is cast, for it is that makes the vallies and mountains, the capes, promontories and winding shores, the bays and gulphs
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and oceans. It contains the same quantity of earth and water as when in that smooth antediluvian form supposed by theory Burnet, wherein there was neither mountain, valley, sea nor ocean. And in the smaller productions of nature, it is the form and structure of the seed that fits it for producing such a particular plant, and the structure of the plant that causes it to bring forth such particular leaves, flowers and fruits, with their several colours, odours and flavours. Neither do metals, minerals, fossils and soils, nor the elements themselves differ any otherwise than by their internal contexture. But the form and texture of compounds depend upon the position of their parts with respect to one another, nor can change without their changing places or some of them flying off or new particles acceding to the mass. We see bodies continually vary their forms, being generated, encreasing and decaying, some by quicker and others by slower degrees; where we do not observe them grow or decay, we perceive them altered in quality and appearance: and tho' there be some solid bodies of which we have no remembrance nor evidence of their ever having been otherwise than they appear, yet is there reason to believe they did not always carry the form they now bear.

2. Therefore

2. Therefore every present position of particles in any compound or collection whatever was generated, but before they came into their present order they must have stood in some other position with respect to one another, whether in different parts of the same compound or at a distance therefrom : and it was the situation they lay in then, together with the proximity and action of other bodies upon them, which brought them into the places they now occupy and generated the form they compose. If the particles forming a blade of corn had lain any where else than where they did last year, either in the earth or the air or the vapours, they would not have come together into that blade : and if a grain of sand upon the shore had been in any other part of the ocean than where it was, it would have received a different impulse therefrom, and been thrown upon some other coast. Thus the station which every particle holds in any body, whether animal or vegetable or earthly or elementary or ethereal, and the share it contributes to the form and secondary qualities thereof, depend upon the place wherein it stood before entering thereinto, but not solely ; for they depend likewise upon the contiguity, force and direction of other particles impelling it into the compound, as also upon the situation of parts in the compound itself

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turning it different ways or affording it a place of rest.

But the universe having nothing external, the present station of all the particles therein must result from that they had before, together with the quantity and direction of motions among them, which generate the laws of nature and so much of the courses of fortune as are the product of material causes. So that the order wherein matter now stands arranged depends upon that of the last year, this again upon the preceeding, and so on without our being able to trace it to the beginning. But tho' we cannot trace out the first position which matter ever had, we have seen reason to conclude that all the particles thereof must, either in time or from eternity, have received their respective stations and motions from the First Cause: and that whatever motion was then impressed thereby, occasioning mutual impulses between them, threw them into that order and those combinations which constitute the compound bodies we see, and give them their form and their qualities. Thus upon any quantity and kind of motion imparted to matter, the changes it will undergo and various assortments it will fall into, follow in a necessary series until some new motion shall be impressed.

3. But

3. But though every thinking person will readily acknowledge the changes of quality, form and position, wherein matter and impulse alone are concerned, to be governed by the laws of necessity and to take place precisely according to the presence and operation of the causes effecting them: yet the same cannot be admitted with respect to the actions of voluntary agents, which have some influence in working alterations among the bodies around them, and a greater in bringing good or evil upon one another. For they do not act by necessity but by volition, nor, like matter, barely transmit but produce the motion they give, and can stop or change the course whereinto bodies had been thrown by impulse. Yet though they do not act necessarily, they act exactly in consequence of certain causes: for there are other causes beside motion and impulse, and another law beside that of necessity to govern the turns of volition. After what has been offered by Mr. Locke and in the sixth chapter of our first volume, there remains no room to imagine a power of indifferency in the mind, or to doubt that she steddily pursues satisfaction in every motion she makes, exerting her activity from time to time in that way which appears to her most eligible, which the judgement represents as most expedient

pedient or the fancy as most agreeable upon the present occasion. Thus our actions follow precisely according to our present apprehension of things, according to the final and ideal causes starting up to our thought; neither can we conceive a created Being excited to voluntary action any other way.

Let us now consider whence those apprehensions must arise, for the mind does not make them for herself, it is not her act that causes a rose to appear red, nor three times four to produce twelve, nor virtue to be more laudable than vice: but she is always passive in perception, and only discerns objects exhibited to her by something else. But we have shown that the perceptive mind is one uncompounded substance, therefore that something else which exhibits the ideas, can be none other than the corporeal parts of our composition, the sensitive or mental organs impressing different perceptions according to their different modifications: but the modifications of body can arise only from the position or motion of the particles whereof it consists; and the series of perceptions succeeding in spirit, must depend upon its position in a set of organs apt to take such particular modifications.

If any man makes a difficulty of conceiving how the perceptions and acts of his mind
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can follow according to the positions of body let him take up any book to read : one book differs from another only in the position of letters combined in different words and expressions, yet he will find the train of thought springing up in his mind, as he goes along, run on according to those combinations ; and if he reads aloud, his action upon the organs of speech will proceed conformably thereto. In this employment it is the satisfaction expectant upon the instruction or entertainment he shall receive, which carries him thro' the several steps of his reading : and so in all his other proceedings some desire or satisfaction prompts him to read the modifications in his sensory, and to exert his activity in pursuance of the information they give. But then the action of external objects, passing thro' his mental organs, will be somewhat varied according to the condition those organs have been left in by other prior objects striking upon them. Therefore if he runs over two or three pages in the middle of a book, he will scarce receive the same ideas therefrom as he would had he come to them regularly from the beginning, for the little fibres of his organs will take a different position according to that they had been put into before. So likewise if two persons read the same discourse, 'tis odds but they will see the
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the matters contained there in different lights; but this is owing to their degrees of sagacity depending upon their natural constitution, or upon the state their imagination has been formerly cast into by education or experience or study or conversation. For whether in reading or whatever else a man can perform, his action proceeds always according to the notices of external objects or according to the present scene of ideas in his mind, the desires, the views, the apprehensions, the lights, the directions, suggested by his judgement or his fancy. If we examine to what these are owing, we must ascribe them either to mechanical causes or to some former acts of his own or of other persons: but then those acts in like manner followed from the scene of ideas exhibited to the agent at the time of performing them, and if we trace them backward to the first act that ever was done, we shall find it terminate in the condition of the sensory when exciting the first perceptions.

Thus with respect to our mental organs as well as the productions of nature, every position of their parts giving them their secondary qualities of affecting us with such or such perceptions, follows in consequence of a prior position: not indeed always mechanically, for our own acts and those of o-
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ther people frequently interfere, but when we consider that those acts were determined by the then state of imagination directing thereto, it will appear that the changes made thereby proceed by as certain rules though not in the same manner, that is, not solely by mechanical impulse, as those worked upon one another by bodies. Hence it is manifest that the talents, endowments and sentiments of percipient Beings depend upon the position of material particles and the place wherein they lie respectively stationed among them: and the operations of spirit as well as body must be referred originally to the power and direction of the First Cause.

4. As for those who hold that the materials of their knowledge lie within the mind itself, I know not how they avoid making it consist of parts, one wherein the ideas composing their knowledge lie dormant and unperceived, until the other fetches them forth by contemplation and recollection; nor what stuff they conceive the ideas to be made of, which remain in the mind for long intervals without her discerning them. But whatever their notions may be upon this article, I suppose they will hardly deny that the knowledge they have was either born with them or acquired since their birth: what was born with them was given by that Power

Power which gave them their Being, and what was acquired they gained either by their own sagacity and experience or by the instruction and conversation of others. Their sagacity or aptness for making improvement, and the opportunities of their experience, must have been furnished by nature or external causes; and what they learned from others must have been first acquired by them from the same sources, or received from other instructors who gained it in the same manner: for instruction cannot encrease the stock of knowledge in the world, but only spread it: and whatever is taught, was originally discovered by the teacher or somebody else. I believe it will be allowed that any two men, having exactly the same turn of mind, would act alike under the same circumstances: the circumstances of the case must be acknowledged to depend upon external causes, and their turn of mind was either natural, and then they must ascribe it to the Author of their nature, or effected by some prior act of their own, which act must likewise have depended upon the turn of mind they then had when they performed it: thus turn will follow turn until you come to that they received at their birth.

He must have a very peculiar way of thinking who can persuade himself he should have

gained the same acquisitions, had he been destitute of all those means of improvement that have been afforded him : and tho' some make extraordinary advances in a particular science or profession under great disadvantages, every one is ready to acknowledge this owing to a happy genius and vigour of mind with which nature had befriended them. But because such persons work out their improvements by their own industry, they take the merit of it to themselves, forgetting that they were prompted to that industry by the ease they found in the first steps of their progress, and assisted therein by the greater acuteness of their faculties. Thus upon either hypothesis we may conclude, that the qualifications of free agents whereon their good conduct depends, spring from the gifts of nature or means of improvement : all which derive either directly or remotely from that origin which gave the first position and motion to matter, producing the order and variety we behold upon the face of nature ; and which allotted to spiritual substances their respective stations among the corpuscles of matter.

5. Having satisfied ourselves that the course of things, as well in the natural as moral world, proceeds in a continued series or chain from the operations of the First Cause, which is God omniscient and infinitely wise, there
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needs very little reflection to convince us that this First Cause knew not only the positions and motions he gave to matter and stations of the spirits he had created, but likewise what changes and productions they would generate by their mutual action upon one another: and if he knew what would result from his work, we can as little doubt that he framed it with an intention that it should have that result. This choice and adjustment of the proper causes to work their destined effects, we call Providence: for as a man provides for his children by furnishing them with the education, portion and other means, which may enable them to live a usefull and happy life; as every provident person, who has any great work to do, will prepare the materials, engage the workmen and labourers, and give the orders necessary for bringing it to perfection: so whatever God designs to produce by the operation of second causes, he provides sufficient agents, gives them the powers, the impulses and the motives, requisite exactly to answer his purpose. If he determines to bring plenty or scarcity upon the earth, he disposes the air and the elements in such manner as necessarily to produce either: if he resolves to build up or pull down kingdoms, he raises up men with peculiar talents, fitted either for improving the arts of war and

policy or for throwing all things into confusion. From hence we may gather that the Providence of God is over all his works, and that in the formation of sentient as well as unsentient natures, he had in view that series of changes and events they would produce, and ordered his whole multitude of second causes so as to execute that plan of Providence he had in his intention. Which plan contained the order of succession we have spoken of in several places before, whereof the systems and courses of nature, the dispensations of good and evil, the fates and fortunes of men and other sentient creatures, are the several parts ; which whether it has run on for ever or had a beginning, owed its rise either from everlasting or at some certain time, to the power and action of the Almighty.

6. But tho' every one who believes God to be the sole First Cause of all things, and not to have formed the world out of uncreated materials capable only of being fabricated in such or such particular manner, will acknowledge that every thing contained in the divine plan falls out according to the divine intention, yet some have doubted whether all events that have happened were comprised within that plan. For as in human affairs if a man lays his measures ever so compleatly, there will follow other consequences besides those

those he had in view : when the farmer plows his ground he disturbs the vermin and insects, tears up their nests or destroys them without intending it : so in the plan of Providence there may lie unimportant events which God cared not whether they should happen or no, not belonging to it but necessarily resulting from the parts designed, such as the falling of particular leaves or floating of straws upon the water ; and these will be absolutely casual, as being unforeseen by any created mind and unthought of by the Divine. Thus the Stoics, as we learn from Cicero, held that God took care of great matters but neglected small ones : my lord Bolingbroke seems to have been of the same opinion : and if we attend to the common discourses of men concerning chance and fortune, we shall be ready to think this the idea generally prevailing amongst them.

Now if we examine why they entertain this idea, we shall find them induced thereto by two considerations : one because they look upon little matters as unworthy the notice of God, and esteem it derogatory from the divine majesty to suppose him attentive to the crawlings of an emmet or tossings of a feather in a tempestuous air ; the other because the drawing a plan to contain every the minutest event without exception, they con-

ceive to lie among the absolute impossibilities and be impracticable even by infinite wisdom and omniscience.

But for my part I can see nothing unworthy notice in itself, the wisest men can attend to the motions of insects or floating of little bodies in the air, when they have nothing else to do; and if at any time they scruple attending to trifles, it is to avoid contracting a habit of being drawn off by them from matters of greater importance. For our notice lies confined within a narrow compass, we cannot fix our eye upon one object without overlooking others; therefore must accustom ourselves to disregard some objects, as being unworthy to engross that observation we shall want for conducting us in affairs of moment. But there is not the like reason to deem any thing unworthy the notice of God, unless we will suppose they must so engross his attention as that he will not have enough left to bestow upon the weightier affairs of his government.

Thus this objection resolves itself into the other, namely, the impossibility of all, even the minutest, events being comprised within one plan and calculation: and indeed it must be owned an inconceivable thought that shall contain every little motion produced and to be produced throughout the universe: but so
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it is if we consider only the rise and fall of kingdoms, the lives and deaths, successes and distresses of mankind, which whoever will allow God to take care of any thing, must admit to lie under his direction; for this alone requires a greater extent of design than our imagination can comprehend. But we must remember that the Attributes of God are incomprehensible, his thoughts are not like our thoughts, nor his intelligence like our understanding, dependent upon ideas exhibited by our organs which can take only a certain number of modifications, and if we endeavour to introduce more we involve ourselves in perplexity and confusion. Whereas God perceives not by organs, but being present every where and intelligent every where, we may as well apprehend him to discern and direct events throughout the immensity of space as in any single point of it.

7. The theory of universal Providence being thus established, let us proceed to examine whether there is not evidence of it in the phenomena of nature. If God had thought proper to leave any thing to chance or necessity, we cannot imagine otherwise than that he would have so ordered his plan as that those blind causes should not interfere to disturb or alter it in any part: but in fact we find events so interlaced among one another, that

those of the greatest moment often depend upon others we should think the most trifling and unworthy regard. The causes of dearth and fertility depend upon the vapours and little particles floating about in the air; plague, murrain and many distempers, derive from the same sources: therefore those little particles must have their commission when and where and in what quantities to flow, or health and sickness, abundance and famine, might overspread the earth without the knowledge or intention of the Almighty. Winds and weather depend upon so many complicated causes, the action of the Sun, attraction of the Moon, situation of the mountains, exhalations from the ground, that no human science can investigate them: yet how often has the scale of victory been turned by a particular wind blowing dust in the faces of one army? How often has a vanquished fleet been saved by a favourable gale wafting them into places of security? How then can we say God giveth victory, unless we allow him to take cognizance of every thing conducive thereto? For tho' he gave better conduct to the general and greater vigour to the soldiers on one side, these advantages might be overbalanced by a certain temperature in the air causing it to move this way or that.

Perhaps

Perhaps it will be thought enough if the causes, operating to produce this temperature, be set at work in the gross, and that it is no matter whether a few more or less particles be employed, nor what places or girations be assigned to each particle among the whole. For when the farmer sows his corn, he does not mind the exact number of grains he takes up at each time into his hand, nor whether any two of them fall the tenth of an inch further or nearer to one another. But man acts by the gross members of his body, to which he gives an impulse by one operation of his mind; and when he acts upon several little bodies, the motions they receive depend partly upon their figures, magnitudes and situations, which are too numerous and too various for him to observe. Whereas God acts not by limbs nor by external stroke or pulsion upon the outside of a mass but by actuating the component parts, whereof such and no more receive such and none other impulse than he impresses upon them: for he pervades and is present with them all, nor can remain ignorant or inobservant of what impulses he gives, or what subsequent motions they must necessarily produce by their mutual action upon one another.

8. If there be any who cannot readily comprehend the force of this argument, let them
turn

turn their thoughts to such incidents wherein the structure of particular bodies, and position of their parts, manifestly give the turn to the event. Men have been killed by the fall of boughs from trees or bricks from buildings as they passed under, but had the fibres of the bough, or mortar holding the bricks together, been ever so little stronger or weaker, or the least particles in either placed otherwise, they would have fallen a moment sooner or later and the lives of the passengers been saved. Some have been bitten by adders whom they trode upon as they walked along, others destroyed by swallowing wasps in their liquor: these owe their deaths to the minute causes which brought the wasp or the adder to that particular spot; nor would the general laws of instinct guiding those vermin, suffice to conduct them unerringly to the very place where their operation was wanted. There have been persons who have lost their lives by a gun presented against them in play without knowing of its being loaded, and perhaps after having tried twenty times in vain to let it off; others have been saved by a pistol flashing in the pan: here the little particles of rust or damps among the powder, must be exactly adjusted to make it take effect at the destined instant and not before. What is it marks out the paths of
bullets

bullets flying about in an engagement? the strength of the powder, the manner of making up the charge, its being closer or looser rammed; and a hairs breadth difference of position in the muzzle from whence they were discharged, will cause them to miss or to destroy: which little difference may arise from inequalities of ground the soldier stands upon, from the manner of his tread, the stiffness of his cloaths, or what he has eaten or drank a little before. Therefore all these minute circumstances cannot be neglected, even if we will suppose God only to determine how many shall fall in battle that day, but not to care whether John or Thomas make one of the number. How many have come to their ends by sudden quarrels owing to an inadvertent word, a slip of the tongue, or an expression misunderstood? What havock and devastation do fires make occasioned by a single act of forgetfulness or heedlessness?

Nor is the condition of mens lives less under the power of slight causes than the issues of them: the behaviour and diet of a fantastic woman cannot but influence the constitution and temperament of the child she bears: the giddy carelessness of a nurse may bring on maims, fractures or diseases, which can never be cured. And how much soever we may fancy the number of such accidents regulated

gulated by general laws, yet it can never be ascertained upon whom the mischief shall fall without attending to the fancies and other trifling causes concurring to each of them. It can scarce be doubted that the tenour of every man's conduct and fortune depends very much upon the situation wherein to he was thrown at his birth, the natural endowments and dispositions wherewith he was born, or that these depend as much upon the persons who gave him birth, as theirs did upon those from whom they sprung: so that he might either not have been born at all or have run a very different course of life, had his parents or his parents parents been otherwise matched. But who can help observing what trivial causes, what turns of humour, whim and fancy, sometimes bring people together? an accidental meeting, a ball or an entertainment may begin the acquaintance, a lucky dress, a handsome compliment or a lively expression first engage the notice, or an officious old woman drop a word that shall give the preference. Nor do the consequences of such fortuitous engagements always terminate in the parties or their children or childrens children, but may spread wide among the human species: for they may beget a Genius who shall invent a new art or improve some usefull science, or
produce

produce peculiar talents fitted to make a politician or a general who shall influence the fate of nations. Perhaps the Roman common-wealth might have subsisted longer or the empire been established in another family, if Cesar's grandmother had worn a different coloured ribban upon such a certain festival.

Thus we see the scheme of great events can never be so surely laid but that they may be defeated by little accidents unless these likewise be taken into the plan. And whoever will take pains to contemplate the whole concurrence of causes contributing to govern the weightiest affairs of mankind, will find many inconsiderable ones among them, these again depending upon others as minute, and so growing still more numerous and complicated the further he goes backward, until perhaps at last he be ready to believe with Plato that the whole world is one tissue of causes and effects, wherein nearly or remotely every thing has an influence upon every thing. From hence we may conclude not only that the young ravens are fed and the lillies of the field arrayed in the glory of Solomon by the Divine provision, but that of two sparrows which are sold for a farthing not one of them falleth to the ground, not a hair is lost out of the number upon our heads,

heads, not an atom stirs throughout the material world nor a fancy starts up in the imagination of any animal, without the permission or appointment of our heavenly Father.

9. Having satisfied ourselves, as well from reason as observation of the facts we experience, that the smallest no less than the greatest events lie under the particular direction of divine Providence, it remains to enquire to what kind of Providence we shall ascribe them: for there are two sorts, a disposing and interposing Providence. For tho' no Theist can doubt that God upon the creation so disposed his elements and other parts of nature, as that they should bring forth those productions and those changes in the affairs of mankind which he in his wisdom thought proper to ordain, yet there are many very pious persons who conceive that the causes of particular events were not provided in the original plan, but that his Providence continually watches over all his works, that by his secret energy from time to time he alters the motions of corporeal particles, governs the ideas of animals and turns the thoughts of men, to work out his intended purposes. Now without denying that the case may be so, let us consider whether it necessarily must be so.

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The art of man can make a clock that shall strike the hours, point out the minutes and perform other more curious movements in their proper order according to the extent of the works: he may set up this clock in his house for the direction of his family, to give them notice when to go about their particular employments; and thus may lay a plan containing the motions of mechanism and actions of free agents. But this plan will be very narrow and imperfect, the clock will want winding up or fall out of repair, his servants will not always obey orders punctually, nor his family be always ready at the appointed hour. For he must frame his work of such materials as he can get, the weather and other external causes will affect it, and the persons he intends to be directed by it will have schemes and humours of their own which he cannot foresee nor controul. But the Universe having nothing external which might interfere with the play of its wheels, being composed of materials prepared by the divine Artist with such powers and properties as he pleased to assign them, if it contained matter alone we might easily apprehend how it might go on like an immense clock, performing regularly and exactly all the movements projected. Yet when we reflect on the inertness of matter and how much motion

tion is consumed continually by the collision and pressure of bodies, it will appear evident that this clock could not go on for ever without winding up from time to time. Nevertheless the experience we have of our own activity in moving our limbs, may persuade us it is not impossible that God may have given his spiritual substance sufficient power to repair the constant decays of motion, and keep the material clockwork regularly wound up. Then again when we reflect that the action of this substance is alike certain with that of body, having found it to depend either upon the disposition given it upon creation, or the ideas exhibited by modifications of matter thrown into them by the operations of other matter or the acts of free agents determined likewise by the same two causes, we must acknowledge this action equally capable with the impulses of matter of being comprized within the original plan.

And that it might actually be so comprized, the infinitude of the Divine intelligence, to which an infinite multitude of objects cannot appear perplexing or intricate, leaves no room to doubt : neither that all events as well minute as important happening either among body or spirit, may have followed in a continued succession of effects and causes from the operation of the Almighty upon them

them at the creation. If we go on to enquire when this operation was performed, we can set no limits to the time. Was it ten thousand years ago? God was omnipotent, good and gracious, to disperse happiness and manifest his glory among his creatures before that period. Was it a million of years? Neither then had the divine Attributes their beginning, but were unchangeable and eternal: the same power, and the same immutable Will to exert it, having subsisted for ever. Therefore there is no absurdity in imagining that the act of God might have been compleated an eternity ago, that he has ever since rested from his works, and all things have gone on by second causes in the order of succession established from everlasting.

10. On the other hand, an inactive Deity, doing nothing for many ages past besides contemplating the play of his works, seems repugnant to our idea of perfection, as that includes omnipotence and an absolute command over the creatures; which we cannot well apprehend without an actual operation upon them to govern and direct their motions: for power never exerted does to our thinking scarce deserve the name of power. And tho' we cannot suppose otherwise than that God is compleatly happy in himself, nor

wants amusements to pass his time agreeably as we do : yet neither is it incongruous with our notions of him to whom nothing is labour or trouble, that he should not have dispatched his work once for all to solace himself ever after in quiet and repose, but should have reserved himself something still to do wherein he might find continual employment for his almighty power. Nor does this supposition derogate from his infinite wisdom, because it does not represent him as making the world imperfect out of necessity, for want of skill or ability to frame one which should run on for ever without correcting, but by choice, because he so enlarged his plan as to take in, not only the motions of matter and actions of sentient and intelligent creatures, but likewise his own immediate acts ; which we may say were contained among the list of second causes, second not to any prior agent which might give them force or direction, but to the first determination of his Will and to the plan or order of succession he laid down from everlasting. Thus we see the doctrine of an interposing Providence, or none, equally tenable in theory, and therefore remains a question proper to be determined by evidence of facts and contemplation of nature.

11. Now to consider first the nature of intelligent creatures, to whom a just apprehension

sion of their dependence upon their Maker is necessary to preserve them in a happy tenour of mind, and to regulate their conduct with respect to one another: if we should imagine God abstaining from all action ever since his creation of all things, tho' we might still adore his excellencies and acknowledge his power, we should apprehend his power already executed and ourselves as having no further concern therewith; we should look upon him as having abandoned us to the operation of second causes, and that upon them only we need fix our attention; we might be apt to live as without a God in the world, esteeming it matter of meer speculation whether the course of nature proceeded originally from him or no. For this reason in a former place I have represented God under two characters: the Creator dwells in unaccessibile light whereto we cannot draw near, remaining there the distant object of our adoration only; but it is the Governor of the world on whom our hope and dependence rests, to his interposing Providence we look up for succour in our distresses, for a blessing upon our endeavours, for a happy turn to our thoughts, and the course of outward accidents so as that they may operate to our benefit: but without some interposition God would be utterly lost to us in his character of Governor. And tho'

we have reason to believe there are other understandings larger than our own, we cannot conceive any who might not be liable to forget there is a power above them, if they never knew a single instance of its having operated among them. Since then God has so constituted his intelligent creatures as that some interposition of his power is requisite to manifest itself to their observation, we may presume that he has accommodated their capacities to his own manner of proceeding, and that he does sometimes interpose; for else he would have given them other faculties capable of entertaining a just sense of his Almighty power and dominion without it.

12. In the next place let us cast our eye upon the form of this earth we inhabit, which we find tending nearer and nearer every year to a smooth surface by the higher grounds washing into the sea. I do not pretend to say whether it will ever become a perfect level, nor that there may not be some rocky parts which no weather can dissolve, or gravelly soils which no rains can drive along: but I do say that if the earth had been eternal, all that was capable of being removed must have been gone long before this time, nor could there have been any mud left to foul our rivers, but they must have run pure as a limpid fountain bubbling from the ground.

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What quantities of soil stop up the channels of the Nile! Had the causes which brought them thither been always at work, why were they not driven down before the Phenician times, when the seven mouths were all navigable? And now they are there, what powers in nature can we discover or even conjecture, that shall carry them back again to the mountains of Ethiopia from whence they came.

Then to turn our thoughts from the face of this globe to its annual course round the Sun and that of the other planets, Sir Isaac Newton assures us that the ether thro' which they pass, makes some tho' a small resistance against their progress: this resistance, small as it is, must by degrees render their orbits more and more eccentric, and consequently contract their shorter diameters. Let us suppose this contraction to be no more than one inch in a year, yet when we consider what an inexhaustible fund of years lies within the compass of eternity, if they had moved for ever they must have lost inches enow long ago to reduce them, first to the condition of Comets, and afterwards to throw them into the Sun; from whence we know of no power in nature that could ever get them out again. We may fancy explosions in the Sun which may cast up huge masses from his body as big as our earth, but then if thrown directly up-

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wards they would fall down again as soon as the impulse of the stroke was spent, like a stone tossed up with one's hand : or if thrown obliquely they might then make one giration in a long ellipsis which would bring them back to the spot from whence they set out. For a rectilinear or elliptical motion can never be brought into a circular without a tangential impulse received at the instant when the body comes into the circle wherein it is to move ; but what force or what cause shall give it this tangential impulse we shall hunt for in vain throughout all the stores of nature. Since then we find that earths and vortices were not eternal, nor yet could be produced by any laws of matter, we must conclude that the divine power interposed, if never else, at least in their formation.

13. Perhaps somebody may urge against me my own hypothesis of the mundane soul, to whom I have ascribed power to assort the corpuscles of matter into any combinations and thereout to form vortices, earths, plants, insects, brutes and men, and to render the animal organizations sentient by infusing into them particles of its own substance. But let it be remembered that I have all along disclaimed the use of hypothesis in proof of any doctrine, as believing it too weak a foundation to support a superstructure alone, and
proper

proper only for illustration of truths already founded upon some more solid bottom. Nevertheless if any body will apply my hypothesis to the present subject, let him take the whole of it intire: for as a complainant in Chancery, who would avail himself of the facts discovered in an answer, must take them all together as set forth and not pick out those only which suit his purpose; so in arguing from an hypothesis, it is unfair to proceed upon a part of it separated from the rest. Now how much soever I have supposed the ministry of the mundane soul employed in the generation of worlds, I have never supposed him to enter upon the task without an express command and particular plan exhibited to him from above. I have assigned the material world for the sensory of the mundane soul, presenting ideas thereto by the various modifications of its parts, as our human sensories present ideas to us by the modifications of our organs: and these modifications are made to change partly by the workings of our corporeal mechanism and partly by our own voluntary operation. For we find thoughts start up in our minds spontaneously, and others we call up ourselves by recollection and study: many of those arising mechanically intrude upon us against our Will, and against our utmost endeavours to

keep them out. But the mundane soul being intimately present throughout all the parts of his immense body and having an absolute command over it, will in the ordinary course of his proceedings suffer no modifications to form nor ideas to appear contrary to his liking, nor can any happen unless by his own act or by the mutual impulses of matter consequent upon the motions he gave it. Nevertheless upon extraordinary occasions when some great work is to be entered upon, he will find modifications in his sensory which he did not produce by his own action, nor were produced by the necessary laws of matter and motion: these then he will ascribe to an immediate operation of the Almighty, as well knowing there are no more than two active powers in nature, God and himself.

If we reflect further upon what has been observed a few pages before concerning the multitude of second causes influencing the affairs of this world, and how intricately they lie involved and complicated among one another, we shall be apt to believe them too much for the mundane soul to manage, whose understanding altho' prodigiously large is not infinite; and shall judge it more likely that he should want direction from time to time for conducting them, than that he should not want the like for the formation of a new world

world and calculation of all events and consequences to result from the combinations and motions he produces therein. These manifestations and directions may be looked upon as revelations of the Will of God, and of the measures which divine wisdom judges proper for executing his purposes: wherein the mundane soul will not be liable to the mistakes too frequently fallen into by mortals, who take their own fancies and the vapours arising mechanically in their brain for divine illuminations; but he having a perfect knowledge of all his own motions, will be able to judge unerringly what are truly such, and what owing to the act of some other agent. Thus this first of created Beings having manifestations of the divine Will and designs from time to time, cannot want evidence of a governing and interposing Providence: and tho' we have not the like manifestations, yet the phenomena which we know cannot have proceeded from an eternal chain of natural causes, are an evidence to us that God has interposed since his original creation: and whether we apprehend him to have done this with his own hand, or by his minister particularly instructed for that purpose, either opinion sufficiently attended to, will keep alive in us just sentiments of his being our Governor and the supreme disposer of events.

14. But how rare or how frequent soever we may imagine these interpositions, we always find the agency of second causes employed in bringing forth the destined effect. Not that the method of immediate operation could not have been taken, for whoever acknowledges the power and omnipresence of God, must admit that he might have created his substances perishable, so as to have needed his continual support to uphold them in Being and actuate all their motions, as Bishop Beveridge and Dean Sherlock have supposed; or that he might have given his sentient creatures their portion of happiness without the intervention of matter or space, by exciting in them a succession of perceptions, in the manner Bishop Berkley has imagined: but experience supplies us with no ground to believe he has pursued either of these methods. We see our pains and our pleasures brought upon us by the impulses of matter or dealings of our fellow creatures, and in every dispensation there is a chain of natural causes lying between the divine act and event produced thereby. The most zealous favourer of interposition will scarce maintain that, when a man is to be destroyed by a wasp in his beer, the cup was placed in the window or the casement thrown open or the wasp driven thither by a supernatural force, or the insect rendered invisible that

that the person might not discern his danger: but at most will suppose a secret energy influencing the fancies of the careless servant who set down the liquor, or the man who snatches it up, and the senses of the little animal, so as that they should all co-operate towards the destined event. Thus in every act of interposing there is a disposing Providence too, containing a plan of the operations that shall infallibly follow upon the impulses given to the causes set at work.

It is this manner of proceeding by second causes that opens the door to our deliberations and measures of conduct: for we cannot penetrate into the secret purposes of God, nor know when or what immediate acts he will perform, neither can we learn any more of the scheme of his Providence than what may be gathered from observation of the natural causes that are in act. Therefore it behoves us to investigate those causes as far as we have ability and opportunity for so doing, because from them only we can attain any knowledge of the divine œconomy, which whenever we can discover it will prove an unerring guide to our proceedings. The neglect of this duty, and inobservance of second causes, throws men into all the delusions of superstition and enthusiasm: for while they imagine the divine power exerted upon every particular

particular occasion, they overlook those rules of prudence which God has given for their direction : they deem it unnecessary even to think for themselves, expecting an especial guidance for every thing they are to do : which lays them open to the deceit of illuminations, dreams, omens, prodigies and such like trumpery. On the other hand a too close attachment to second causes is apt to generate prophaness, making men forget the First, and substitute an undesigning chance or blind fatality in the room of it. But this can never happen provided they bear in mind that, how far soever they may trace the chain, they must rest it in the divine operation at last, which whenever exerted they will find accompanied with a disposing Providence directing it in such manner as to produce the whole series of events to follow thereupon. And the longer the chain, the greater number and intricacy of causes and effects it must contain, and the larger must be that plan of disposition which gave beginning to it. Therefore the more a man thinks, he will discover natural causes lying still further and further behind one another : he will find his idea of interposing Providence gradually diminish, and that of the disposing proportionably encrease.

Therefore let not men condemn one another too hastily of impiety or superstition, for

for both are relative to the strength of each person's sight: the philosopher may entertain so high an opinion of infinite wisdom, as that upon the formation of a world, it might provide for every event that is to happen during the whole period of its continuance; therefore he is not impious in asserting that all things since have gone on in the course of natural causes, for his idea of the first plan is so full as to leave no room for any thing to be interposed. This the plain man cannot comprehend, the lines of his view being short, therefore he is not superstitious in imagining frequent interpositions, because without them he cannot understand a Providence at all. He may likewise find it impossible to conceive that every motion of matter and turn of volition should be calculated or foreseen, but supposes a watchfull Providence continually attentive to the tendency of second causes, interposing every day and every hour of the day to correct the errors of chance, and secretly turning the springs of action the way that wisdom and goodness recommend. And he is excusable herein, if this be the best conception he can form; for it derogates not from his idea of the divine wisdom and dominion to imagine there should be room left in nature for chance, so long as there is a superintending power who can foresee the irregularities

larities of chance time enough to prevent them.

15. Thus how largely soever we may ascribe to interposition, or how much soever deduct therefrom to add to the disposing Providence, we cannot deny that every natural cause we see is an effect of some prior cause, impulse of impulse and volition of motives and ideas suggested to the mind ; therefore must refer all dispensations ultimately to the act of God : and as we cannot imagine him to act without knowing what he does and what will result therefrom, we must conclude that act to proceed upon a plan and disposition of the causes tending to produce the particular consequences following thereupon. The only difference between the man of common sense and the studious is concerning the time when the disposition was made, which the one thinks a few days or a few minutes, the other many ages ago, the one frequent and occasional, the other rare and universal ; but both acknowledge that nothing ever happens without the permission or appointment of our Almighty and ever vigilant Governor. Since then there was a disposition made at some time or other of the causes concurring to produce every event, let us try whether we can gather any probable knowledge of the motives inducing to such disposition : for we cannot

cannot conceive a voluntary agent providing for the completion of any work without some design in view, which is the motive urging him thereto. But we cannot behold God as he is, nor apprehend his manner of proceeding any otherwise than by analogy with our own; we being the only intelligent Beings of whom we have any direct knowledge or experience.

Now it has been shown in the former volume that our motives may be distributed into four classes, pleasure, use, honour and necessity: these then we must ascribe to God, tho' with some alteration suitable to the difference between his nature and our own. With us pleasure or satisfaction stands at the end of every line in our views, 'tis that renders it the object of our desire, and urges us to pursue it: we perform all our actions, whether considerate or inadvertent, because we judge or fancy that we shall put ourselves into a better condition, or gain greater complacency of mind, by doing than omitting them. But pleasure in this sense we cannot with any colour of reason assign as a motive with God, whose happiness we conceive essential and invariable, so that nothing can be done either to enhance or diminish it; neither did he perform any act whether of creation or government to procure a moment's enjoyment
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for himself. We can descry no further point in the views of God than the goodness of his sentient creatures, whom he created capable of happiness and showers down his blessings upon them, of his meer bounty and goodness, without any obligation engaging or benefit of his own inviting him thereto. But in our ordinary discourses concerning actions whereof we cannot discern the motive, we usually ascribe them to pleasure, and so we say God was pleased to create a world and fill it with good, thus pleasure seems again to stand at the end of the line: but then it does not carry the same signification as when applied to ourselves, it is only a vague term, employed for want of a more adequate, to express that pure bounty which we conceive flowing spontaneously underived from any higher source. Nevertheless there may be some other Attribute giving birth to goodness, altho' we cannot conceive it: at least this much we must allow, that there are methods of proceeding taken which require some other inducement to the choice of them.

No body can doubt, as we have observed before, that God might have given his creatures their portion of happiness by his own immediate act, without that complicated tissue of second causes and extensive system of Providence thro' which it is conveyed to them,

them ; and I believe few will imagine him so confined to the present constitution of nature as that he could not have contrived some other equally productive of good and enjoyment. But goodness respects only the happiness imparted, nor casts a preference between the several means by which the same quantity may be conveyed : when a rich man sends money to relieve a person in distress, it is kindness which prompts him to the deed, but this directs not whether to send it in notes or Portugal pieces or English coin, whether by the steward or the butler or the groom, for if each species be equally convenient and all the servants equally trusty, kindness is satisfied with any of them alike ; therefore he must have some other motive to determine his choice among them. Thus that we receive blessings at the hand of God is owing to his goodness, but that he chooses this or that method of communicating them, must arise from some other cause : for we cannot suppose him to proceed without some reason as well for the manner as the substance of his proceeding, which reason we shall try to penetrate in vain, therefore can refer it only to his good pleasure, the term we use for expressing every principle of action whereof we cannot discern the grounds.

16. Nevertheless since God has been pleased to pursue this method of transmitting happiness to us thro' certain mediums, this gives rise to the next class of motives, those of use: for there being many materials and instruments without which we could not attain the portion of goodness designed for us, the provisions made for preparing them to our hand must be deemed as having respect to their usefulness. Not but that the divine views are large and piercing, nor ever terminate upon an intermediate point, but look forward to the particular uses which every thing was intended to serve: but our views being short, incapable of stretching always to our ultimate end, but resting upon certain stages seeming to lie in the way towards it (for we bestir ourselves lustily in accumulating usefull things, without knowing what we shall do with them or whether any benefit shall accrue to us therefrom); therefore we are excusable in conceiving of the divine proceedings after a manner suitable to our imagination, that is, by piecemeal. For we cannot follow them to that crop of particular enjoyments they were calculated to produce, but must stop at the materials prepared, which we apprehend serviceable in general to our conveniences and uses. Thus when we consider the multitude of various plants with
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which God has cloathed the earth, we regard the admirable contrivance of their fibres and vessels and several parts as designed for the uses of the whole, to nourish it, to promote its growth and cause it to yield fruit; and the curious structure of the seed as calculated to produce a plant of its own kind. But many seeds perish without producing any thing, many vegetables tend to the benefit of no living creature we know of, and where we do behold a man receiving benefit or pleasure from them, we apprehend him applying to his own wants what was provided for the general service. In all these cases we discern a wisdom adapting the means proper to each production, the perfecting whereof is the use of those means; and as we sometimes cannot, and generally do not, carry our thoughts further than that end, we must apprehend use to be the motive in disposing such causes as bring forth the productions of nature.

17. God has given some of his creatures a capacity of knowing himself, of contemplating his works and adoring his power, his wisdom, his goodness and mercy; and he has so ordered his courses of nature and Providence as to display those excellencies evidently to the considerate mind: therefore that disposition whereby things were so ordered, we must believe made with a view to the mani-

festation of his glory. Thus glory bears a considerable share among the motives influencing the divine operation. Yet we cannot well imagine glory the ultimate end, for this would imply a want of something external to compleat the happiness of God, whose satisfaction might be augmented by becoming the object of adoration to his creatures: besides it may be presumed there would be higher capacities and stronger manifestations among them than we find by experience. But he has so constituted his intelligent Beings that glorifying and entertaining just sentiments of him contributes more than any thing to fill them with satisfaction of mind, to ennoble their views, brighten their prospects, and inspire them with a readiness to promote one another's benefit: therefore is he jealous of his glory as being a principal channel thro' which he conveys his blessings to them. If we go to examine why he made this a channel of his bounty, why man alone of all the visible creation is capable of partaking in the stream, why he gave us such and no higher capacities, such and not more glaring evidences of his glory than we have, we can resolve this into nothing else beside that general cause which takes in every unknown principle of action, his good pleasure. It has been already shown in the proper place how
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in our own minds use grows out of pleasure and honour out of use, for we are led to desire things usefull by their tendency to serve our conveniences and pleasures, and to cultivate a principle of honour by experience of its usefulness to carry us thro' noble and arduous undertakings: but because we cannot carry our views to the last consequences of our proceedings, therefore we rest them upon use or honour as motives of action distinct from pleasure. In like manner when we contemplate the designs of Providence, good or happiness of the creatures is the furthest point we can imagine: the all-seeing eye of God looks always to this or perhaps beyond, but our eye, not always able to reach so far, must necessarily terminate sometimes upon use or glory, further than which we cannot discern a connection. And by observing carefully the methods taken to bring forth these purposes, we may gradually improve our sense and knowledge of the œconomy of Providence.

18. The fourth class of motives, that of necessity, arises from evil, which we cannot suppose either man willingly to undergo, or God to inflict, without a view to some greater good which could not otherwise be obtained: neither is it ever sent from the fountain of goodness unless as a necessary means to accomplish some gracious purpose. But this

necessity was not imposed by any thing external, or by an independent nature of things absolutely eternal and unalterable, for this would destroy the unity of the First Cause, but by the Will of God upon his original constitution of them at the creation. It were in vain to search for the motives of that Will, for we know very little of him in his character of Creator, nor can pretend to account for his proceedings: not that we may therefore pronounce them unaccountable or arbitrary, but ought rather to believe them grounded on substantial reasons to us inscrutable, as being drawn from Attributes whereof we have not the least knowledge or conception. Yet we may gather from observation of what we see, that he has established certain laws which he has rendered unalterable, having confirmed them as it were with an oath or covenant binding even upon himself in his government of the world. Among these we may reckon the evil sprinkled over his works, which is so interwoven among the good that one cannot be had without the other. It is said that offences must needs come, now no body can doubt the Divine power could have prevented them, but then the good which was to be worked out of them must have been lost. It is said likewise that God chastises those whom he favours most,

most, and tries them with sufferings and afflictions as gold is tried in the fire : but then that purity which is the result of the trial would not have been attained without it. And tho' punishment be commonly understood as having respect only to the past, yet when we consider that a righteous and dispassionate man would never punish unless for sake of some benefit redounding to the public greater than the hurt brought upon the offender, we shall scarce imagine otherwise of God with whom is mercy as well as justice. Therefore whatever evil we find among the dispensations of Providence, we may conclude thrown thereinto upon a motive of necessity, a necessity which God in his character of Creator has imposed upon himself in his character of Governor, by having constituted his sentient creatures in such manner as that happiness cannot be conveyed to them compleatly unless thro' the road of pain and uneasiness either in themselves or others. And necessity, considered as a motive, always implies some advantage beyond ; for we never deem it necessary to submit to any thing against our liking but for procuring some benefit or preventing some more grievous mischief ; nor can we conceive but that the like view renders necessity a motive with the disposer of all events. Wherefore we may look upon

the evils dispersed among mankind, the helplessness of infancy, infirmities of age, the pains, diseases, distresses, afflictions, labours, and those inconveniences of life which we do not find turning to our account here, as necessary preparations for our better living hereafter, or productive of advantage some how or other to higher species of Beings.

19. For there being one Creator and one Governor of the universe, it can scarce be doubted that there is one plan of government extending throughout the boundless dominion, and regulating the interests of all the sentient creatures inhabiting therein. In what manner those of the invisible regions stand affected by events befalling here below, it would be a vain attempt for us to particularize; but that there is a mutual connection of interests between them and the visible, we have found abundant reason in the course of this work to believe. Wherefore those phenomena which Lucretius calls the faults of nature, wherewith he says she so largely abounds, instead of proving that the world was not made in wisdom and goodness, may with better reason be looked upon as evidences that our heavenly Father has other children to provide for besides those falling under our cognizance; and that whatever appears wrong or needless or wasteful to us, is necessary

sary for their uses. I know that some good people persuade themselves that the courses of nature and fortune are ordered for the best, even with respect to the interests of man here upon earth, nor could be altered in any single point without endamaging his condition in life some way or other : but it would be very hard to make this appear to an unprejudiced observer who has not more zeal than knowledge, or to convince him that infinite wisdom could not have contrived a better world, wherein our days might have passed more comfortably and happily than we find them do ; nor need we disturb ourselves at the difficulty. For my part these seeming faults, and the vast profusion of second causes, whereof many serve but little to the uses of man, are so far from being stumbling blocks to me, that I look upon them as an earnest of our future expectations. We have apparent marks enow of a wisdom displayed in this visible world, to satisfy us that the affairs of men and all nature lie under that guidance : therefore I care not how many instances may be produced wherein the purposes of that wisdom are frustrated or incompletely answered here, because I may reasonably infer from thence that they are fully compleated elsewhere. Our continuance here is but for a moment in comparison with the long abode
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we are to make in the invifible world : therefore there lies our principal concern, and our opinion of its value muft be heightened by the cares we obferve beftowed upon it by infinite wifdom. But fince we know that wifdom does nothing in vain or fuperfluous, whatever we find fuperfluous to ourfelves, the vaft effufion of light, the boundlefs fields of ether, and many huge mafles of matter which fcarce afford us a trifling benefit, muft be provided for the benefit of thofe Beings among whom we are to take up our chief refidence : of which refidence therefore we have reafon to think the better, the more errors and fuperfluities we can find in nature.

20. Nor does animal or rational nature abound lefs in errors than the material : the foolifh Oſtrich drops her eggs upon the fand where many of them grow addle and periſh, the fimple ſheep licks up the autumnal dews hanging upon her paſture which gives a rot to her fleſh, the heedleſs fly obſerves not the cobwebs which entangle her in deſtruction. Birds, beaſts and infeſts, overpower, enſnare and lie in wait to prey upon one another ; and it is neceſſary they ſhould do ſo to keep their numbers within bounds, for nature produces more of every ſpecies than ſhe is able to maintain. Then to turn our thoughts
upon

upon imperial man who boasts his being the lord of this sublunary kingdom, observe how he runs himself continually into vexation, disappointment and mischief, by his folly and indiscretion: dangers hang over him which he cannot discern, measures escape him which would conduce most effectually to his purposes; if he consults his reason he finds it dark, doubtfull and erroneous, nor knows he half the tendency of his proceedings in matters most nearly concerning him; for prudence covers her face from him as with a veil, and truth hides herself at the bottom of the well. The honest-hearted labour under sickness, distress, weakness and ignorance, so that they want ability to do the good they desire: the wicked possess riches, power, strength and sagacity, which they employ wholly in trifles or turn to the detriment of their fellow creatures. Now will any body pretend, or does he think it for the divine glory to assert, that infinite wisdom could not have given his animals a compleater instinct to warn them against every thing tending to their damage, could not have formed those of the carnivorous kind so as that they might have been nourished by vegetables, nor have adapted his causes of generation to the provisions made for their sustenance, nor have given man a more piercing understanding to penetrate thoroughly
into

into his truest interests, nor have dispensed his talents where they would have been most usefull. If then we acknowledge these things ordered by a wise and beneficent Providence, yet that they do not answer the purposes of beneficence in this visible world, we must needs conclude them calculated for some benefit to the invifible: and in this light we may regard them as beneficial to ourselves, we having a concern in provisions beneficial to that community whereof we hope one day to be members. These confiderations I think may persuade us that the departed spirits do not reside in empty spaces wholly detached from the material universe, whereof they remain meer spectators only, spending their eternity in hymns expreffive of their admiration, or at most praying for us now and then to the throne of glory: but that this mighty fabric we inhabit, together with the tranfactions and events among men and animals, ferve to some uses of theirs, and furnish them with employment for exerting their activity in obedience to the Will of God. Surely this idea is not unworthy the Majesty of our almighty and omnifcient Governor: an idea which binds together heaven and earth, the host of separate spirits, the distant stars, the numberless planets, the elements of nature, the race of men, the brutes, the reptiles

tiles, the grains of sand, the particles of air and ether, in one all-comprehensive plan; wherein nothing stands alone, but all the parts connect with one another and all the springs contribute to the workings of all the rest.

21. We know not indeed how to trace out the connection, nor scarce to conjecture in what particular manner our little transactions, our pleasures and pains, affect the higher classes of Beings, nor yet is it needfull that we should: for God knows how to direct the actions of inferiour creatures to more distant and important purposes than they are aware of, and gives to every one the senses sufficient to guide it in acting the part he designed it to perform. The bee, when she lays in her honey, thinks nothing of the services it may prove of to man: the silk worm spins her thread without regard to the fine brocades and tissues that he will weave out of it: the horse pushes on before the plow to secure himself from the lash, nor has any conception of his preparing the ground to bear oats for himself or wheat for his master: in like manner our reason presents us with short aims and scanty prospects, but God has instructed this guide to mark out the stages leading to remote purposes of his own. Let us then make the best use of reason's candle, for tho' it cast
light

light only upon a few steps just before us, we may trust his Providence for having laid out the path to what length he thinks proper: and while we pursue our own little interests prudently, we shall without knowing it promote some advantage of other Beings to whose uses he has been pleased to make us instrumental.

22. Our view of Providence must be partial and imperfect at best, wherefore much of the wisdom of God will appear foolishness to man; and so does wisdom always appear to such as have not capacity to discern the justness of her measures, nor the ends for which they were pursued: but the more attentively we observe the luminous tracts, we shall find them spread further and further into the dark and exceptionable: and they will quickly open before us an ample field for contemplation. For we may discover wheel within wheel, trace an admirable connection between many of them, discern an exact adjustment of them with each other, and perceive one contrived to serve various purposes.

It were needless for me to undertake what has been better executed by others before me, I mean, to particularize the phenomena wherein there appear footsteps of wisdom striking to the eye or easily discernible with a little attention: such as the apportionment of the
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the elements, the form of this terraqueous globe, the variety of soils and foffils, the distribution of rivers; the curious structure of feeds and plants, their different qualities adapted respectively to the uses and conveniences of living creatures; the wonderfull machinery of animals containing within a small compass innumerable works severally performing the offices of nutrition, growth, circulation and instrumentality of action, yet so dexterously laid together that the voluntary motions do not interrupt the mechanical; the degrees of sense and instinct given to the brute creation, sufficient to direct them in providing nests, in choosng proper food and harbouring places, but not sufficient to protect them against the assaults of other creatures who live by their destruction; the strength, sagacity and docility which render them serviceable to man, the parts or excrescencies of their bodies applicable to his uses, the honey, the wax, the silk, the oak-galls and other works of their industry, which supply him with materials of commerce and accommodations of life.

As to the two faculties of the mind, enabling her to receive such an infinite variety of perceptions, and to exert her actions upon any of the particles lying within the sphere of her presence exclusive of the rest, these are
rather

rather evidences of almighty power than of wisdom, as being primary properties given to her with her existence by an immediate act, and so requiring no disposition of causes to produce them. But when we reflect on the human sensory, the immediate object of all her perceptions and subject of her volition, we must acknowledge an admirable contrivance there. Whether this sensory be the pineal gland, the antierour ventricles, the center of the ethereal cobweb, or whatever else we may imagine, it is evident from anatomy that the chamber of her residence is extremely small: yet within this little chamber, what multitudes of images hang round! Sensations, reflections, combinations, comparisons, distinctions, judgements, vocabularies of language, forms of expression, figures of speech, remembrance of facts, faces of our acquaintance, fashion of things familiar to us, knowledge of common life, professions, arts, sciences, abstractions, rules of morality, measures of prudence, passions, desires, imaginations, all within this narrow compass, yet all so nicely disposed as not to cover or obscure one another. Besides these, within the same compass are contained the particles serving for instruments of her activity, connected severally with the other parts of the sensory or nerves of the gross body; and all in such orderly

derly disposition as to lie under command, so that she can move any limb, call up any idea, or pursue any train of thinking she pleases, without mistake or disappointment. A little reflection upon these things may show us, that the mental organization is still more wonderful than the wonderful mechanism of our outward composition. And tho' it may be, as we have formerly remarked, that all those images do not exist together (for we never have more than a few ideas in our view at one instant), but that the same parts of our sensory are thrown into different modifications by the act of the mind, or workings of our animal circulation, and so exhibit successively the several stores of our knowledge as wanted, like a slate which may have written upon it successively all the pages of a large volume: yet when we reflect what multitudes of springs must be requisite to produce these changes of modification, in that orderly manner and under that command of the mind which we experience, it will rather encrease than abate our wonder.

Then if we turn our eyes from the courses of nature to those of fortune and the disposal of events, we may observe how men are cast upon their several professions, schemes of conduct, places of residence and alliances, whereon the colour of their future life depends, by various

causes; by their natural temperament, by their education, the company they consort with, and accidents befalling them: how families rise to prosperity, flourish a while and then wither and fall into oblivion: how kingdoms are formed out of a rude rabble, maintained with various successes and broken to pieces: how sects of Religion start up from small beginnings, possess the minds of the multitude, force princes to obey their injunctions, and in process of time become neglected and exploded.

Nor can we well fail to distinguish a Providence respecting mankind in general, conducting them thro' the stages of infancy, growth and maturity, similar to those of human life. We find them living in the earliest ages with great simplicity of manners and narrow compass of knowledge: when nations were formed they scarce had intercourse unless with their next neighbours, the accounts brought them of all the rest were fabulous and romantic: by degrees arts and sciences sprung up among them, and new refinements as well in virtue as vice were the produce of every generation: accidental discoveries by private persons, such as the invention of printing, of gun-powder, of optic glasses, of the magnetic needle, have spread their influence over a great part of the globe:
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the growing extent of commerce tends to associate the nations with one another, to communicate customs, opinions and improvements, to connect them in interest, and perhaps in time may unite the world into one community.

Thus we see the comprehensive plan of Providence, which by reason of the narrowness of our capacities we are forced to consider by piecemeal, appears to us containing innumerable under-plans relative to the interests of particular persons, of the families or societies whereof they are members, and of the whole human race: each provided with a disposition of second causes proper to bring forth the issues intended, and so admirably adjusted together as to coincide instead of interfering with one another. And as we have already shown how much small events may affect the greatest, all this could not be effected surely unless not only the motions of bodies, but the senses of animals, the thoughts and actions of men were comprehended within the plan.

23. But an objection has been raised of old against the doctrine of all events, as well those depending upon the acts of voluntary agents as upon mechanical causes, being directed either by a disposing or interposing Providence, as leaving no room for liberty of

Will, for the justice of reward or punishment, of praise or blame, or for the expedience of consulting upon the measures we are about to take. For why need I deliberate on a Sunday morning whether I shall go to church or to the tavern, if it be contained in the decree of heaven to which place I shall resort? The Will of God must be fulfilled do what I can to obstruct it, nor would it become me to obstruct it if I were able: therefore I may be careless of my conduct, as well knowing that he has planned out such a course of my actions as shall conduce to the accomplishment of his purpose. Then if every thing that shall happen be comprized within the design of Providence, and the causes provided which will unavoidably bring it to pass, what praise or reward do I deserve for taking the better part, what blame or punishment for the worse, since either was an event settled before-hand which I could not turn aside? Again, if it depend upon my choice whether to drink or pray, and one of them be pre-determined, there must be causes in act which will infallibly influence my choice one particular way: therefore I have no liberty of Will, no freedom of choice, nor command of my own determinations, and tho' the success be left to my option yet the option itself is not left to me.

me to make, but I am confined to that which the causes aforesaid shall dictate.

Nor do these difficulties lie upon the believers of Providence only, but affect equally the atheists of both sorts, whether Stratonics or Epicureans. The former took Necessity for their First cause, or rather admitted no First cause at all, but held that all events proceeded by a necessary consequence from the causes concurring to produce them, which causes were produced in like manner by others preceeding, and so on in an unbroken chain from all eternity: now whether we suppose this chain upholden by an intelligent Being or self-sustained, it is all one to our present purpose, for in either case if the acts of voluntary agents follow necessarily upon the impulse of external causes, there will be a constant fatality upon them utterly subversive of liberty, estimation and prudence. Epicurus indeed denied the reality of fate, insisting that many things happened which were absolutely fortuitous: but then he could not get over the argument drawn by his opposers from the certainty of either the affirmative or negative of every proposition that could be uttered concerning what is to come to pass hereafter, which is applicable to the issues of chance as well as those of necessity. If you are to throw a die, how in-

dependent soever the cast may be upon prior causes, yet if you say you shall throw an ace and I say that you will not, one of us is certainly in the right; we know not which indeed, but when the die falls we shall know without danger of a mistake. So if Epicurus in his lifetime had said that on this 14th day of January 1762 it would rain here in the morning and be fair in the afternoon, now the day is ended we may know that he spoke a certain truth: but truth cannot be turned into falsehood by any thing subsequent, therefore it was impossible any other weather should happen than has, because otherwise that might have been rendred false which we know for certain was once true. Neither could the fact contained in a proposition, which was true two thousand years ago, become casual ever afterwards; for if it was always to come to pass, as we know it was from the event, it could never have been possible that it should not come to pass, but what was always impossible could never lie under the power of any cause or option of any agent to have effected.

24. On the other hand men could never be persuaded out of their liberty, nor prevailed upon to relinquish their claim to the command of their own actions, a privilege they feel themselves possessed of by every day

day and every moment's experience: so this has remained a constant topic of debate, both among orthodox and infidels, ever since men began to pursue abstract reasonings and examine into the nature of action. It seems to have been a point too difficult for human reason to clear up, and Milton represents it as above the reach of the fallen angels tho' superiour to man in sagacity and penetration: for he says many of them sat on a hill apart retired, and reasoned high of knowledge, fate, and Will, fixt fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute, and found no end in wandring mazes lost. But tho' mankind too have continually wandered in these mazes, they have often taken up their quarters for a while in each particular division of them. For it is observable that either side of the question has spread over large territories and among numbers of people, and has become alternately the received opinion of the age. To say nothing of former times, the articles of our Church favour strongly of predestination, which in the next century was exploded, and freewill bore all the sway. The Socinians of those days I think asserted that human actions were unforeseen and contingent even to God himself, and the orthodox attributed his knowledge of them to his being present throughout all futurity rather than to his

knowledge of their causes. So his knowledge was not prescience but direct intuition: and lately the other opinion seems to have been creeping in again. Hartley declares expressly for the necessity of action; Berkley ascribes all those objects, appearances and changes of situation or circumstance which we conceive the effects of our own conduct, to an immediate operation of the divine power; and Locke had maintained before them, that liberty is as little applicable to the Will as squareness to virtue or swiftness to sleep. This shows that both have an intrinsic vigour which, tho' they may lie overwhelmed for a while by unfavourable accidents, enables them to rise again in their original splendour, from whence it may be presumed that both have some solid foundation in truth and nature: for as Tully observed long ago, time wipes away the inventions of imagination, but confirms the 'judgements of nature.

And we may remark that the partizans on either side remain safe while they keep within their own trenches, for the arguments proving that every effect must have adequate causes to produce it, that all causes derive their efficacy originally from the act of God, that he does not act without knowing the issues of his proceedings, are invincible: on the other hand the common transactions of life, the resolves

solves we daily make, and pursue in our conduct, are evidences that we have a choice and command of our actions to every one who will not distrust his senses and his experience, the only basis of all our other knowledge. Wherefore the litigants do not endeavour so much to invalidate one another's arguments as to overpower them with other arguments they think stronger, and the dispute may be drawn into the following syllogisms, A universal Providence disposing all events without exception, leaves no room for freedom, But there is such a Providence, Therefore no freedom: or on the other side, There is a freedom of Will, Therefore no such Providence. Thus both parties lay down the same Major, without which they would make no scruple to admit the Minor assumed by their antagonists. But the most sober and considerate part of mankind, induced by the strong evidences both of freedom and Providence, have foreborn to pronounce them incompatible, the only obstacle against the reception of either: yet look upon their consistency as one of those mysteries which we are forced to admit tho' we cannot explain. Nevertheless there have been mysteries in nature which time and industry have unravelled, and as there are some observations we have picked up in the progress of this work
which

which I conceive may loosen some of the knots in this intricate subject, I shall hardly be blamed for making what use I can of them, which I purpose to do in the following chapter.

C H A P. XXVI.

F R E E W I L L.

BE H O L D us now arrived at the most intricate part of our journey, an impracticable wilderness, puzzled with mazes, and perplext with errors, where many mighty have fallen, and many sagacious lost their way: for shadows, clouds and darkness cover it; or what flashes of light break out from time to time, present the image of truth on opposite sides; the winding paths lead round the disappointed traveller to the spot from whence he set out, or involve him in difficulties wherein neither Protestant nor Papist, neither Divine nor Philosopher has yet found an opening, and which the sacred muse of Milton pronounced insuperable, even by the Devil himself.

In this dangerous road we may be allowed, with better reason than the Poets, to call in
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some superior power to our aid, but what Muse, what Spirit, what God shall we invoke? For here are no private transactions unseen by mortal eye, no dreams of Rhesus broken off by the sleep of death, no secrets of nature lying beyond our reach to be discovered: we need not dive into the bowels of the earth, nor ascend to mix among the dances of the planets, nor dissect the human frame to find all the curious threads of its organization. But our business lies with the common actions of life, familiar to every one's and every day's experience: we want only to know, whether a man may act freely who makes his choice upon motives suggested by external objects, whether he may know beforehand what his neighbour will do, or offer inducements which will infallibly prevail on him to one particular manner of behaviour, without infringing upon his liberty. Questions that one would think could scarce admit of a dispute; nor do they with common understandings, until men of uncommon refinements have, by their abstractions, spun them into a sence not naturally belonging to them, and introduced a confusion into their ideas, by an inaccuracy of language. Therefore upon this subject I conceive we shall have more to do with words than with things, nor find so much difficulty in ascertaining the facts

facts to be taken under consideration, as the proper import of the expressions employed in speaking of them.

Come then thou solemn power Philology, pioneer of the abstruser Sciences, to prepare the way for their passage ; enwrap me in thy close-bodied leathern jacket, that I may creep through the brakes and brambles of equivocation without their catching hold of me ; lend me thy needle-pointed pencil, that I may trace out the hair-breadth differences of language ; assist me with thy microscope to discern the minute changes of ideas passing to and fro among the same words, as they change their places in different phrases.

If any one will follow me while I travel under thy guidance, let him look for other-guised entertainment than when bestriding Pegasus we bounded along the rapid rays of solar or stellar light, to visit the Athenian and Samian Sages, to behold the wonders of the vehicular state, and boundless glories of the mundane soul.

For thou, Goddess, consortest not with the Muses nor the Genii, the flights of imagination affright thee : figure and ornament are thine abhorrence, for they blend together in wanton assemblages those ideas which thou art most solicitous to keep asunder : familiar example alone, of all the flowry train,
thou

thou admittest to shed his lustre upon the print of thy mincing feet, and render the marks of them more easily discernible to the straining eye. But industry, and scrupulous exactness, are thy constant companions; labour and vigilance, thy delight; thorns and briars, the favourite plants of thy garden. Whoever undertakes to accompany thee there must prepare himself for toil and attention; he must observe the path exactly in which thou ledest him, mark all the outlets on either hand, pass and repass the whole length again and again before he ventures into another turning; that he may fix so perfect an idea of it upon his memory, as never to mistake another similar alley for the same.

But say, Goddess, by what avenue shall we enter the wilderness? Does not thy methodical prudence direct, that upon every question we should first know precisely the terms concerning which the question is proposed? Where then can we better begin an inquiry into the Freedom of Action, than by ascertaining the proper import of freedom?

2. Liberty, says Mr. Locke, is a power, and so is Will; therefore they cannot be predicated of one another, for it would be absurd to affirm of a power that it has a power. But with submission to the authority of so great a Master, I conceive Liberty

a more complex term than he has made it, and though it includes an idea of power, it contains other ideas beside. And as I apprehend it to be a negative term implying no more than a denial of restraint and force; for when we say a man is free, we mean nothing else than that there is no hindrance against his doing or forbearing what he has a mind; therefore it will be expedient to consider how we come by the notion of Restraint or Force.

We find ourselves possessed of several powers of action, we can walk, or speak, or think, or can let them alone: sometimes diseases or other accidents deprive us of our powers, and then we can no longer perform the functions of them; but at other times, though we remain possessed of our powers entire, yet we cannot exert them, by reason of something stronger counteracting them. Thus a man in the stocks has not lost his power of walking, the vigour of his muscles is not abated, nor is he less able to bear the fatigue of a journey on foot than he was before; nevertheless, he cannot walk at all, because the closeness of the wood resists the motion of his legs, therefore he is under a restraint which hinders him from using the power nature has given him. So if he be pushed along by another stronger than himself, he must

must move forward whether he will or no ; not that he has lost the natural command of his limbs to put them in motion or keep them at rest, but because he is under a force greater than he can resist.

Thus Restraint is a comparison between some power and an impediment preventing it from performing its proper function, as Force is the like comparison between the power of forbearance, and some external impulse which renders action necessary, but forbearance impracticable ; and Liberty denotes the absence of the other two ; for when we pronounce a man free, we understand thereby that there is nothing either impelling him to do what he would not, or restraining him from doing what he would. So that all three, Restraint and Force as well as Liberty, include the idea of Power, nor can either of them subsist where there is none ; for the bars of a prison are no restraint to a paralytic, nor will you give him liberty by unlocking them, neither can you force a man to fly, or a horse to speak.

We may observe further, that Liberty is so far from being the same thing with Power, that it may be restored by the loss, and lessened by the accession of it. Were an act of parliament made to prohibit me from going out of London for a twelve-month,

month, I should think it a grievous restraint upon my liberty; but should I be rendered unable to stir abroad by gout or palsy, or some other complaint which I could not hope to get rid of in the time, the restriction would no longer be such to me, and I should remain as much at liberty, as if the statute had never been made. On the other hand our cloaths are made to fit our bodies, so that we can move all our limbs freely, notwithstanding the many ligatures and coverings wherewith we are enveloped; but should it please God to cause a pair of wings to sprout out from our sides, we should find our cloaths a troublesome restraint upon us; and we must send for our taylor to cut flits in them for letting out the wings, in order to restore us that liberty we had lost by the superaddition of a new power.

Hence we see that liberty is so far from being inapplicable to power, that it is properly applicable to nothing else; nor is it an absurd question to ask, whether a power be free, for it implies no more than to enquire how such power stands circumstanced with regard to any force or impediment which might compell or obstruct the exertion of it. And when we apply such questions to the agent, they bear a reference always to some power he possesses, therefore

therefore a man may be free and restrained at the same time with respect to different powers of action; for he that is locked fast in a room may be free to think or speak, though he is not to go abroad; but a power to do some particular act cannot be free while constrained, nor the contrary.

Indeed there are degrees of freedom, not incompatible with a partial restraint, but rather implying it, as when we find some impediment obstructing us, though not so great as that we cannot surmount it; for a man with heavy jack-boots on can still walk, though not so freely and alertly as in a neat pair of shoes: such obstacles do not debar us the use of our powers, but render it difficult and laborious, or limit them in compass.

3. Let us now cast back our eye upon the path we have trodden, in order to discover what equivocal outlets there may be to mislead the unwary traveller. We get our idea of power, says Mr. Locke, from the changes we see made in substances by one another: therefore the word Power originally and properly denotes a quality or property in something to cause those changes, and is synonymous with ability, and we have hitherto used it in that sense. But it often carries a larger signification, comprehending

other circumstances besides ability; so that according to the various lights wherein we place it, a man may have power when he has it not; that is, he may have it in one sense while he wants it in another.

Suppose a person of full health and vigour bound down in his bed by a multitude of threads wound all over him; another seeing him lie motionless, but not knowing the occasion, fancies him struck with some sudden distemper that has taken away the use of his limbs; he laments his unhappy condition, in being at once deprived of all his powers of action: must not we pronounce this complainant mistaken, for that the man has lost none of his powers, but they all remain entire as ever, though he cannot use them until the strings that tie him down be loosened? If a second person comes into the room who takes the case differently, ascribing the man's inactivity to a fit of laziness with which he upbraids him, shall we not plead in his excuse, that it is no fault of his that he does not rise, for that the bandages hold him down so tight, he has no power to stir either hand or foot?

Thus we see that power may be truly affirmed or denied in the same instance, according to the manner wherein the question is proposed, or thoughts of the person proposing it;

it; and a man may have ability sufficient for performing a work, which yet he is not able to do, by reason of some obstacle, want of some instrument or material, or other circumstance standing in the way.

We may presume Mr. Locke understood Power in this extensive latitude, when he made it the same with Liberty; for where he observes that a man on the south side of a prison has power to walk northwards but not southwards, this were not true, if spoken of natural ability; for the same vigour of limbs which might carry him one way, would suffice to carry him any other: therefore if he want power to walk southwards because the walls of the prison obstruct his passage, the term must be so construed as to include liberty; and in this sense it would indeed be as absurd to ask, whether a Power be free, as whether Blueness be blue, or Hardness hard.

4. We may remark further, that Knowledge is often confounded with Power; for ideal causes being requisite to direct us in the choice of proper actions, we can no more proceed without them than we can without ability. If I have a paper in my custody which I have mislaid, upon being urged to produce it instantly, I shall be apt to alledge that it is out of my power so to do; not because I

have not the key of the drawer where it lies, nor strength in my fingers to take it out as well as any other paper, but because I know not where to look for it. So if a countryman wants to speak with a person living at the further end of the town, he may say it is out of his power to find the house; not that he wants pliancy in his joints to carry him through all the turnings leading thither as well as any citizen, but because he should lose his way for want of knowing the right. But this idea does not enter into disputes concerning freedom, for ignorance is esteemed a defect of power rather than an abridgement of liberty.

It has been shown in Chap. II. of the first Volume that what we generally call an Action, is not one, but a series of many actions; and when we go about to do a thing, we proceed to the accomplishment of it by several intermediate steps, each whereof requires a particular exertion of power to perform it. Now if there stand an impediment any where in the way, we cannot do the thing proposed; nevertheless we remain still at liberty to take the steps lying on this side the impediment, and at all events can use our endeavours, how ineffectual soever they may prove. Thus if a man be hindered from going to London by floods out in the road, he may yet go up
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to the edge of the flood without obstacle : if he be locked into a room, he may push against the door ; and if his fingers be bound round with a pack thread, he may try to expand them, being at full liberty to give his muscles the inflation proper for spreading them open.

It is observable likewise, that restraint is often confounded with impotence, nor can we easily avoid doing so ; for restraint being a comparison between our powers and any thing that might obstruct their exercise, may cease upon their increase, or may be generated by a diminution of our powers, rendering that an obstacle to our motions which was none before. Thus Sampson, after being shorn of his strength, was brought under confinement by the same cords which were no infringement of his liberty aforesaid, and if they had remained on him untill his hair had grown again, he would have been restored to liberty by the return of his strength, without any alteration in the strength of the bandage.

Therefore we pronounce upon the same case, as being a defect of power or of liberty, according to the light wherein we place it : the laws prohibiting the alienation of church lands, are called sometimes disabling, and sometimes restraining statutes ; and we speak

indifferently of a man being disabled to go abroad or confined at home by a distemper. But in strictness, the beginning of a fever works no disability, for there is generally then an unusual strength and flow of spirits, so that the patient might do as he did at other times, if it were not for the necessary regard to his health, which is a bar against his stirring out of the house; whereas a palsy does not properly confine, for air and exercise might be wholesome, and nothing hinders you from going abroad, but you are not able, the use of your limbs being suspended by the distemper.

Mr. Locke says, that active power belongs only to spirit: however this be, we certainly conceive it, and in our common discourses speak of it as residing in things inanimate; therefore we apply the terms Force and Restraint when we perceive them acting or moving in a manner different to that we should expect from their natural properties, as we do Liberty, when nothing hinders their operations: we talk of a free air, a pendulum swinging, or a river running freely, where there is no obstruction against their motions; of water being forced upwards by an engine, or a stream confined within its channel, by raising the banks.

Hence

Hence it appears, that the force of inertness ascribed by naturalists to matter, and the force of impulse causing its changes of state from motion or rest to the contrary, does not carry precisely the same signification with force in vulgar language ; for 'tis the impulse of gravitation, together with its own inertness, or perseverance in a motion once received, that makes a torrent rush violently into the sea ; yet every common man apprehends water to run downwards of itself, nor ever esteems it under a force, unless when he sees it driven upwards by some other power, nor under restraint, unless when something obstructs the course it would naturally take. And though we talk frequently of the force of a torrent, we do not understand thereby any force the water itself lies under, but that we suppose it able to put upon whatever may happen to stand in its way.

Whoever will examine the language of mankind, may find that we apply expressions to bodies which belong properly to our own manner of proceeding ; and how well soever we know the contrary, speak of them as voluntary agents, exercising powers of their own ; thus it is said the wind bloweth where it listeth, and we say of water, that it will not mingle with oil, that it will yield to the rarefying action of heat, but will force its

way through the pores of gold rather than bear condensing by the greatest pressure; terms expressive of a choice, compliance and resolution, similar to those exercised by man.

Nor do the learned abstain from the like catachresis, when they talk of the tendencies and nitencies, the conatus recedendi of bodies, the spontaneous or automatic motions of clock-work, or the laws of matter; and even when they abstract from the secondary properties resulting from composition, they seem to conceive rest as the natural state and choice of body which it exerts its power to preserve itself in; as one may gather from their calling the momentum or quantity of motion in any body a force, which conveys an idea similar to that of a man carried along against his inclination by some impulse he strives in vain to resist.

5. I take notice of these niceties, not so much for any benefit they may be of towards determining the present question, as for a caution to beware of letting such variations of language lead us astray: for the proper and genuine signification of freedom being the absence of all obstruction which might thwart us in the exercise of any power we possess, we are free when upon employing our power it will take effect; but under restraint, when something impedes us in the exercise

exercise of our power, so as that although we should exert it, the proper consequence of such exertion would not follow.

Thus a man is at liberty to walk, if upon using his legs they will carry him to the place he purposes; but if there stand any wall or bar in the way, so that with his utmost endeavours he cannot move forwards, then he is not at liberty. And so in all actions we have ability to perform, if they would not ensue upon our efforts, it must be owing to some hindrance which cramps and prevents them from taking effect.

From hence it appears, that Freedom relates to the event of our endeavours, not to the causes of them; for whether any or no inducement prevails on me to walk, I am equally free, provided nothing hinders me from walking if I stand so inclined. For Liberty does not depend on any thing prior to the exercise of my power, but upon what would or would not stand in the way after having exerted it, and therefore is not inconsistent with any antecedent causes or disposition of Providence influencing me to walk; for how much soever they may impell me to go out of the room, I am not at liberty to do it while the door is locked, and when the door is opened I am set at liberty, how much

much soever they may with-hold me from using it.

But it will be said, all this may be very true, and yet affects not the case under consideration, as it relates only to freedom of action, concerning which there is no controversy, not to freedom of Will: for no Arminian will doubt a man's being debarred of his Liberty by shutting him up in a goal; nor will the most rigid Calvinist deny, that upon being let loose he is at liberty to go which way he pleases. So the dispute turns, not upon our freedom to do as we will, but upon our freedom to choose out of several actions in our power: and both seem to agree, that whatever act is contained in the plan of Providence must be performed, nor can we will the contrary if we would.

6. Before we enter upon the discussion of this question, it will be necessary to understand ourselves in the proposing it; for men seem to me not always very clear in their idea of the term Will, as it stands in either branch of the sentence.

We learn upon Mr. Locke's authority, that we are capable of no more than one determination of the Will at once, and whoever observes the motions of the human mind will find her volitions transient and momentary; she varies her action perpetually, willing this
instant

instant what she rejects the next; and if she perseveres for a time in one purpose, it is by a train of numerically distinct, though similar and correspondent volitions: therefore to ask, whether we can will this present instant, if if we will this present instant, would be an idle and trifling question; it must indeed be answered in the affirmative, and so must every other of the like sort; for I can walk if I walk, ride if I ride, or do any thing else you can name, if I do it. And such hypothetical affirmations may be true of things which categorically proposed were absolutely impossible; for it is as true, that I can lift the house if I lift it, or jump over the moon if I jump over it, as that I can take up a pin if I take it up: such propositions are merely identical, making a show of something profound, but adding nothing to our information.

Therefore the question, to mean any thing, must relate to different Times or different Wills, and the drift of it be to enquire either, whether by willing a thing now I can cause myself to will it by and by; or whether if I happen to will opposite things at the same time, as to buy a costly trinket and to save my money, I can by one Will controul the other, or by a third Will choose which of the two shall have the guidance of my conduct.

To

To the first of these enquiries, one cannot give a direct answer, it being notorious by every day's experience, that we do determine upon what we will do beforehand, and many times do it accordingly, but at other times do it not, and that upon two accounts; either because we have changed our mind, or because though we continue in the same, we find some desire, or terror, or difficulty, rise upon us too strong for our resolution. But changes of mind create no doubts concerning liberty; for nobody imagines that our resolving upon a thing lays us under a necessity of performing it, although good reasons should occur to the contrary, or our judgement should alter; nor will deny, that how strongly soever I have determined to leave London seven years hence, I may remain perfectly free all the while to determine otherwise whenever I think proper.

Which by the way shows Liberty not incongruous with prior causes; for if I do something because I had resolved upon it beforehand, and this we practise every day of our lives, the volition whereby I perform it must be acknowledged an effect of my former determination, nevertheless will be counted a free act in every body's estimation, provided nothing hinders but that I might omit it; therefore if my first determination were contained

contained within the plan of Providence, the performance may make a part of that plan without infringement of my liberty. For even supposing me influenced to resolve by some irresistible grace, or supernatural impulse, though I was not free in making, I am yet free in keeping the resolution, nor does there need any more than to keep off all suggestions which might alter my judgement, or temptations which might overpower it, and I shall execute what was resolved on by virtue of the freedom remaining with me.

But when we change our conduct without changing our mind, and do not prosecute what we have in our intention, by reason of some appetite drawing the contrary way, then disputes and difficulties arise; because we conceive our Will still exerting itself, but prevented from taking effect by a superiour force or impediment counter-acting it, which presents the genuine idea of a want of Liberty.

Thus this question, whether by our present Will we may determine what we shall will at some future time, becomes reduced into that other, whether one Will may controul or confine another coexistent Will.

7. And no wonder we find perplexities in examining metaphysically a question, the terms whereof have no place in the metaphysical

physical vocabulary; for there is a philosophical, and there is a vulgar language, and if studious men will mingle their abstractions among vulgar ideas, they must unavoidably bewilder themselves in mazes and darknefs.

The notion of a diversity of Wills is unknown to him that carefully studies the motions of the human mind, for her acts are instantaneous and transitory; nor can she perform any more than one at the same time: we have various powers of action, and they all lie under the command of the mind to turn them upon one particular object; her giving them that turn is properly volition, and it is as absurd to imagine she should exert opposite volitions together, as that the wind should blow east and west.

We may be restrained in the use of our powers, because their operation passes through several stages; we work upon certain unknown nerves, they inflate the muscles, the muscles pull the tendons, the tendons move the limbs, and if there be an obstruction any where, we have not liberty to perform the action intended, how much soever we may endeavour it. But the acts of the mind upon the first corporeal fibre receiving her impulse are immediate, so there is no room for any impediment to interfere in stopping their progress: we may indeed imagine her to
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lose her power by the fibre becoming incapable, or being removed out of her reach; but we have seen that when power is gone, there is no place either for Liberty or Restraint.

Nor let it be asked, whether the mind be free to determine her own acts; for this implies, that one volition is the consequence of another, and so it may be remotely; but we have shown in a former place, that the mind never acts upon herself, unless by the mediation of motives: for there is no one action of our lives which we do not enter upon through some motive of judgement or inclination, or present fancy; and even if we had an elective power besides our active, how much soever that might determine the latter, it must itself be determined by some satisfaction apprehended in the choice.

But the suggestion of motives to our thoughts is as much an action, as the moving of our limbs, and if any thing obstructs their rising, notwithstanding our endeavours to call them up, we may be free or restrained with respect to that action; but in respect to our first endeavours, we are no more capable of either, in one case than the other.

Therefore we may agree with Mr. Locke in pronouncing Liberty as little applicable to Volition, taken in the philosophical sense,
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as Squareness is to Virtue, or Swiftnefs to Sleep.

8. But if we listen to the common discourses of mankind, we shall find them speaking of several Wills, several agents in the same person resisting, counteracting, overpowering and controuling one another: hence the so usual expressions of the spiritual and carnal Wills, of the man and of the beast, of self-will and reason, of denying our Wills, subduing our passions, or being enslaved by them, of acting unwillingly or against our Will, and the like. All which take rise from a metonymy of the cause for the effect; for our actions being constantly determined either by the decisions of our judgement, or sollicitations of our desires, we mistake them for the Will itself: nor is it a little confirmation of the Will being actuated by motives, to find them so intimately connected therewith that a common eye cannot distinguish them apart.

When in our sober moods we deliberate and afterwards fix upon our measures of conduct; we look upon such determination as our Will, which we conceive not a transient act, but an abiding power, exerting itself from time to time as opportunities offer, until either the design be compleated, or fresh reasons prevail on us to alter it.

But

But it often happens, that some inordinate passion or inveterate habit comes athwart our way, and puts us by from the prosecution of our design, without making us change it: this we likewise regard as our Will, being sensible that what we do by its instigation is still our own act; and because we find the same desire prompting us at different times, we apprehend this too a permanent power lying in us, ready to be exerted upon the proper objects presenting. Thus we get the idea of two Wills opposing, impeding, restraining, and mastering one another.

Sometimes there ensues a contest between them, the mind hovering uncertain for a while, until at last she settles on either side: hence comes the idea of a third Will, determining between the other two; and I believe this gave rise to the notion of an elective, besides our active power.

But these struggles are owing to the fluctuations of strength in our motives, and the victory to some one of them catching the idea of Satisfaction away from the rest: for 'tis well known, that motives as well of reason as passion, do not always appear in equal colours, nor press with equal force, but urge vehemently or feebly by turns, with frequent and sudden variations. And we may perceive the like wavering in our coolest deliberations

between two measures of conduct or two diversions ; wherein the mind cannot be suspected of giving a preference, being disposed all along to follow whichever shall be found the best or most entertaining : but both appear such alternately, until at last the balance of judgement or fancy settles without intervention of the Will to cast it either way.

9. Nevertheless, men cannot be put out of their accustomed manner of talking and thinking ; therefore in compliance with their conceptions, let us suppose a diversity of Wills, that those Wills exert permanent acts, lasting for hours and days without intermission, and that we may will at one time, what we shall will at another. In this light there is certainly room for applying restraint and freedom to the Will ; for its operations being now conceived passing through a length of time before they take effect, may be obstructed, or turned aside in their passage by something else : so if I do in the afternoon what I had determined in the morning to forbear, my former Will still continuing the same, I am under a force, and the Will I have at present is a different Will from that remaining with me from the morning's determination, and counteracts it.

But it being obvious that we can exert our power only one way at a time, we are apt to entertain a contradictory notion that, while
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we have a diversity of Wills within us, one of them only is our own, and esteem each of them such in turn according as we chance to be in the humour. Sometimes it is the Will of inclination, and must be so taken in all expressions relating to self-denial, to curbing our Wills, or to things we do unwillingly, or against our Will, that is, against our liking : but more commonly we understand the determination of our judgement to be our Will, because there are none of us without this Will ; for I suppose nobody ever refuses to do what his present judgement represents as best, provided it give him no trouble in the performance, nor thwart any inclination, or fancy whatever ; therefore this is a Will always subsisting in us, though not always taking effect.

As to the third Will, that of Election, this takes place only occasionally, when there is a contest between the other two : for as nobody ever chooses to act against his judgement without some inclination drawing him, or uneasiness driving him the other way ; so likewise I imagine nobody ever chuses to abstain from doing what he likes, when he sees no reason in the world why he should forbear. When Reason and Inclination urge the same way, or one alone sollicit, the other remaining totally silent, which frequently happens, there is but one object presented to the mind, who

in that case has no room to make any choice or election at all.

Therefore the Will of Judgement or Resolution, in common propriety of language, is to be esteemed our Will; our freedom depending upon the presence, or absence of any impediment which might prevent that from directing our motions: and so St. Paul understood it, where he represents the carnal man as omitting to do the things he would, and doing the things he would not, which he justly styles, a wretched bondage. Nor can that glorious liberty of the Sons of God, which we are exhorted to assert, be better expounded than by an exemption from all inordinate desires and temptations, so that we may perform whatever our reason and duty recommends with ease and readiness.

10. But there is a restraint which our judgement lays upon itself, when an action occurs we judge eligible regarded alone, but cannot be done without omitting something else we judge more expedient, we think ourselves not at liberty to do it. Thus if I am asked to do some little good office for a friend, when some business of importance calls me another way, I shall excuse myself by saying, I would gladly oblige him if I were not under a necessity of attending to my business.

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It is this opposition of things eligible to the judgement, if considered apart, that gives birth to those we have called Motives of Necessity, to Obligation, to Duty, the command of a Superior, the regard for our Health, our Preservation, the avoidance of Mischief, or Damage ; all which compel us many times to act otherwise than we wish, or than our judgement would choose, if these bars did not stand in the way : but this kind of necessity is a very unstable term, the same case being esteemed such in one light which is not in another.

A man having a seal put forcibly into his hand, and the hand with the same violence pressed down upon wax affixed to a deed, containing a conveyance of his estate, will be counted by every body under necessity ; but then the sealing is no more his act than it is the act of the seal employed therein, for both act by impulse without any thing that can be called freedom.

But what if his hands being left at liberty, he be only locked up in a room, and threatened to be kept there without victuals or drink until he shall seal ? Perhaps he has a wife and children who must be ruined by the loss of his estate, and being a man of resolution, he determines bravely to perish rather than bring them to destruction ; in this forlorn

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condition

condition he lolls out at a window, where he sees an intimate friend of his, a lawyer, who advises him to execute, for that no damage can ensue therefrom : he then calls for the deed, sets to his seal, and obtains his enlargement. This the Philosopher will not allow to be an act of necessity, for it was in his power to have forborn ; and he did actually forbear until his friend's admonition having altered his judgement, he chose voluntarily to seal, upon a prudential motive of saving his life without detriment to his family. The Grantees bring ejectment for the land in Westminster-hall, where the whole case appearing upon evidence as above, the judge and jury pronounce the deed void, for that the man was under duress, and his act not voluntary but imposed upon him by force. Thus we find the same act adjudged necessary in legal construction, which was free and voluntary in the philosophical.

Now to change the case a little, imagine the confinement were in a public gaol for a lawful debt, which the party has no means of paying, nor credit to procure bail ; somebody offers to purchase a farm contiguous to his house, and which it would be greatly inconvenient for him to part with, nevertheless he considers his health is infirm, and if he remains in prison it will inevitably prove his death ;

death; so he accepts the offer as the only possible means of extricating himself. If he be afterwards blamed for so imprudent a bargain, he will alledge the necessity of his affairs compelling him to it; and this allegation will be readily admitted as a full excuse. If upon ejectment brought, he offers to refund the money, and refuses to deliver possession, urging the necessity he lay under, I am afraid this plea will not avail him; for the court will say, his act was free and voluntary, nor was he under any compulsion when he did it, therefore it must stand good.

Let us now vary our circumstances once more, and suppose the man under no confinement or debt at all; but he has taken a fancy to some girl of the town; she wants a sum of money to throw away upon an extravagance, and will leave him for some other gallant, unless he will supply her, which he has no means of doing any other way, than by sale of the farm above-mentioned: he is so besotted with her allurements that he cannot live without her; so he executes the conveyance, though solely against the grain, and against his judgement. He will be apt to plead necessity in excuse for this foolish proceeding; but no indifferent person will admit it for such: here then is a necessity men deem

so themselves, though nobody else will call it by that name.

But Necessity being constantly opposed to Freewill, the changeableness of these terms, according to the lights wherein you regard them, gives rise to as notable disputes among us, as those canvassed of old among the philosophers concerning the proper colour of the feathers of a cock-pidgeon's neck, which presents a different aspect upon every little motion of the bird.

11. Every body esteems freedom the basis of morality; for no man deserves praise or blame for doing what he could not help, or omitting what he was not at liberty to perform: we are justified in doing things upon the command of a superiour, which were blameable had we done them upon our own accord; and it is a received maxim, that necessity has no law. Nevertheless the restraints laid upon us by our vices justify us not, and the slave of sin is always thought answerable for the drudgery he goes through in obedience to his tyrant. On the other hand, we may merit commendation, by complying with the necessary obligations of our religion and our duty.

Oftentimes, as has been already remarked, we blend the idea of impotence with want of liberty, or attribute to the one, what proceeds

proceeds from the other ; and indeed the latter in some measure depends upon the former ; for whatever obstacle stands in our way, were our strength increased so as greatly to surmount it, would become none, but we should be set at liberty from its opposition. A man bound hand and foot with cords, upon having the strength of Sampson given him, would regain his liberty without being untied : and a cobweb wound about our hands makes no abatement in our freedom, though it destroys that of a fly ; not that it does not oppose the same resistance against our fingers as it does against the legs of the fly, but because that resistance is nothing in comparison with our greater strength.

When some fond passion captivates the heart, and forces us upon actions our present judgement disapproves, we are said to labour under an impotence of mind ; and the compliance with such temptations as few or none can resist, is attributed to the weakness of human nature. When honour, or duty calls a man to some very painful enterprize, like those of Scævola, Regulus, or the Christian Martyrs, he does not want freedom of action to accomplish it ; for his hands will as readily obey the command of the mind to thrust them into
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burning coals, as into a bason of water, if he can but bring his mind to give the command. Perhaps some of us might resolve upon such an exploit, but should probably flinch in the attempt; and we many times do enter confidently upon undertakings where we find our courage fail in the execution: here then is an effect of the Will directing her own volitions, which yet are forcibly turned a contrary way by the terrors of the pain. So then here, if ever, the Will is not free to follow her own choice and election: nevertheless, when trials of this sort have been undergone, we do not reckon them instances of greater freewill, but greater strength of virtue, and extraordinary vigour of mind.

So if a covetous man intends to give money in charity, but when he comes to take his guineas out of the bag, has not the heart to part with them; he has a Will to do a generous deed, and would execute it if not restrained by his fondness for the pelf; yet we do not ordinarily reckon him destitute of Freewill, but that he has not power to give anything away. Thus we esteem the same case a defect of Liberty, or of Power, according as we fix our eye upon the strength of the obstacle, or feebleness of the agent.

12. The Speculative talk much of a free and necessary Agency, terms not in use among the vulgar, nor do they lose anything by the want of them : for if we go to examine what Free Agency is, we shall find it to be no more than the dependency of actions upon volition ; therefore man is a free Agent, because his limbs move according to the directions of his Will, but Matter a necessary Agent, as having no Will, and acting solely by virtue of the motion or impulse imparted to it.

Not but upon a man's being pushed violently down to the ground his fall is necessary, but then it is properly no act of his ; for though we are apt to say he hurt himself by the fall, which implies something done by him, yet upon mature consideration, we never attribute the hurt to him, but to the person who threw him down : for in this case his motion is similar to that of body, which does not properly act, but only transmits the action of something else that moved it. When a stone strikes against a wall it serves only as a channel of conveyance for the force of the engine from whence it was cast ; that again of the springs and wheels whereby it was worked ; and so backwards in a series of effects and causes, until you come to some voluntary agent giving

giving the first impulse, whose act it is, whether he intend the consequence or no. If a man shoots another, the wound made by the bullet is his act, and he chargeable with the murder; or if he shot at a crow and happened to kill a man, though he be guilty of no crime, still the slaughter is his act; but an undesigned and accidental one. And if we commonly ascribe powers to body, it is because we cannot trace them back to the causes from whence they originally sprung.

Upon this view of the matter, we see that free Agency has nothing to do with questions concerning Liberty, for the one may remain after the other being taken away. A man shut up in a prison still continues a free agent of such actions as he can perform; if he would gladly go abroad but sits still in his wicker chair, as knowing the doors are locked, his quiescence is an act of free Agency, not like that of the chair he sits on, for he might have risen from it if he would. Or if he be shoved along by the shoulders, though he must move, being under a force, yet he is a free agent in the motion of his legs; for a statue pushed along in like manner, being a necessary agent, would have fallen upon its face.

Thus how much soever we may be abridged or confined in our powers, while there is any thing

thing left that we can do, our free agency subsists entire, for this relates only to our manner of doing those actions we perform, that is, by willing them; and consequently in every thing a man does which is properly his act, whether by compulsion or restraint, or free choice, he is in that instance a free agent, or in other words, he is such whenever he is an agent at all.

13. But all this will not satisfy the curious, for they ask further, whether a man have free agency to will such a particular exertion of his power as well as to execute it. Now this is another kind of Agency from that we have been speaking of hitherto; and for distinction sake we shall beg leave to call it free Volency (for the Speculative will allow one another to coin a word upon occasion): so the question is not whether man be a free Agent, but a free Volent; for his agency remains the same, provided his actions follow according to his volition, whatever laws this latter be subject to.

Now in order to raise a question upon this head, we must suppose our Volition the effect of some prior or other act of the Will besides the Volition itself under examination: but we have seen in the progress of this work, that the Will is no subject of her own operation, but takes her turns from time to time, according

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ing to the present state of the judgement and imagination; therefore the epithet Free, can neither be affirmed, nor denied, nor any ways applied to Volency; this not being immediately produced by any exertion of our power. 'Tis true, we do often determine beforehand what we will do, and pursue measures accordingly, which we should have omitted, had it not been for such determination; and in this sense the Will acts upon herself, but then she does it mediately by fixing such ideas, resolutions, or propensities upon the memory and imagination as will serve her for motives by and by; and it is plain her agency terminates with the impressing such ideas, because if they slip out of our head, or something happens to render the determination inexpedient, though we act contrary to it, yet no doubts arise concerning our free Agency, either in the first determination or subsequent volition.

Besides, some of our actions leave room for no more than one operation of the Will; a man turning the corner of a street sees somebody come hastily against him, and suddenly starts back; here the first act of his Will is that whereby he moves his limbs, so there is no prior Agency whereto the term free may be applied.

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There are some who hold two consubstisting Wills, an active and an elective, the latter continually directing the former, how truly I shall not examine; but upon this supposition man is a free Agent, and a free Volent; for free Agency is the dependence of his actions upon volition, and free volency the dependence of volition upon his choice; but you cannot go on further to entitle him a free electant too; for I never heard of any body spinning the thread so fine as to suppose another election determining that which determines the Will: all who hold an elective power making it either dependent upon motives, or self-moving independent on all causes whatever, even on any prior, or other act of the Will; so the term Free cannot be applicable to it, because we are free only in such things as will ensue upon some previous act of the Will exerted to produce them.

We do indeed often talk in common conversation of a free, and a forced choice; but this relates to the consequence of our choice, not to the manner of making it, and depends not so much upon our being able to choose, as to obtain the thing chosen. We say indeed, a man has not liberty to choose when he knows the thing is not to be had, because he cannot will an impossibility; for how much soever we may wish or desire, we never actually

ally Will without a present apprehension of something feasible: but this proves volition dependent upon final causes occurring to the imagination, for an unattainable end is no end at all, because it is not a thing wherein our efforts may terminate, nor can the mind raise a volition of it by any power she possesses. Besides that choice, in vulgar acceptation, lies undoubtedly liable to constraint, we meet with numberless instances every day of our being confined in our choice; which shows that choice in this sense is a different thing from the elective power spoken of just now; for that, the maintainers of it insist upon as a privilege inherent in human nature, which nothing can divest us of, nor any external force, or circumstances of situation controul; but that we have always power to will, how much soever we may be restrained from doing.

14. Thus have I endeavoured to point out some of those variations of sense our words are liable to, according to the occasion introducing them, or light wherein they are placed: and it is this fluctuation of language that makes the labyrinth, and throws up the briars and thorns that entangle us in our reasonings upon human Liberty. For men set out with one question, but scarce have gone a few steps before they slide insensibly into another,

other, from thence into a third, and so on without limitation: no wonder then they cannot come to a satisfactory conclusion upon a subject perpetually changing.

I know of none other use in the discussion above attempted of those several changes, unless to warn men against being beguiled by them, for let them keep their ideas steady, and I believe they will find no difficulties. Therefore I hold it wrong to enter upon a debate concerning free Will in general, that being a variable term, as well in our common discourses, as in our abstract speculations; for the Will is always free, that is, always doing something or other while we wake, yet at the same time may be confined to one, or a few ways of exerting herself: but let them take into consideration particular acts of the Will, and they will find her sometimes free, sometimes under force or restraint, and sometimes neither of the three applicable to her, according to the different lights wherein they regard the matter, according to what they understand by the term Will, and what they apprehend to be an act of her's.

But with respect to our main point the consistency of human Freedom with Providence, it is not much matter what notions men entertain of Liberty, of Agency, of Will, or Choice; provided they contemplate each in-

stance singly by itself, and do not blend them together, nor change them, by juggling like a conjuror with cups and balls. For they must discern so much similitude in all cases of Liberty that can be produced, if they will but keep their ideas clear, and under such discipline as not to jostle, or run into one another, that the same consequences will always follow, how variously soever they may understand Liberty in the several cases proposed.

15. Let us consider a man just enlarged out of prison, who we shall say has regained his liberty, because he can stay at home, or go abroad this way, or that, north or south as he pleases. So his freedom consists in the dependence of his motions upon his Will, in his standing so circumstanced as that nothing hinders but that rest, or motion, or any particular motion he shall direct, shall ensue upon his willing; it does not at all relate to the inducements he may have for willing, whether some prudential motive, or sudden start of fancy, or impulse of passion, or whether he put it to the cast of a die; in each case he remains at full liberty to do as he will.

Well, but suppose him under the authority of some master, who gives him a holiday to divert himself at home, or go abroad wherever he chooses. I shall not dispute, whether the injunctions of a Superiour be strictly

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ly an abridgement of human Liberty, for that they may be disobeyed by any one who shall disregard the consequences : let us grant for the present, that he could not do the thing whereon his choice shall fall, if any prohibition were given against it, yet there being no such prohibition, leaves him besides his liberty of action, a liberty of choice in what manner he shall use his other liberty. Now this liberty, like the former, consists in the dependence of his actions upon his choice ; for where he has free choice, nobody can doubt he will do as he chooses ; and where he has not, he may be forced to do what he does not choose : but it has no concern with the causes of his choice, whether he spend his holiday prudently, or foolishly, according to his own whims, or the persuasions of an acquaintance.

But suppose he has strong reasons either of religion, or duty, or respect to some Relation who may leave him a good legacy which urge him to go one way, but his companions, or his own jovial disposition, solicit him another to the alehouse, and nobody has any authority to interpose ; so he remains still at liberty to choose between them, because he may take either way as his Will and his choice shall direct. No, you say, 'tis not clear that he has a freedom of choice ; for

though I admit he may do as he chooses, yet I doubt his being free to choose; because his evil habit of tippling may force a choice upon him whether he will or no. Beware, my friend, of the mazes in the labyrinth, for we are now striking into another alley, and starting a different question from that we had under contemplation before.

In common usage, we apply Liberty indifferently to the power or act performed thereby; for we say the choice is free when nothing hinders, but that we may do whatever it shall pitch upon, and the act free when it follows in consequence of our choice, and not of any compulsion obliging us to perform it. And one of the most dangerous sources of perplexity arises from the want of distinguishing in our enquiries concerning the freedom of a power, whether we regard it as a cause or an effect; for while we behold it in a double light, as too frequently is done, we shall never see distinctly where to find an issue. According to your present stating the doubt, we must consider it as an effect, the proper object of some power the man has to influence his choice, unless the prevalence of habit should give it a contrary bias.

As to cases of restraint they will conduce nothing to our main purpose; therefore we will consider only such cases wherein you may suppose

suppose a freedom of choice in our present sense of the Term, that is, as an effect of some power we possess.

16. Suppose a man deliberating in the morning how he shall lay out his afternoon : there are no bolts nor bars in his way, no authority of a superiour, nor restraint of law, duty, honour, or obligation, intervening in the matters under deliberation ; so we know his afternoon's actions will be such as his Will and Choice shall then direct ; but neither is there any strong inclination, or passion at work, which might drive him upon one way of employing himself preferably to the rest ; so he stands indifferent to choose now in what manner he shall dispose of himself in the afternoon, nor has he any choice until he shall determine it by some present act of his Will.

I do not give this as a philosophical representation of the case, but certain it is, we often do conceive ourselves in a situation (how justly it is no matter) to will or choose what we shall will and do by and by : for if upon asking a friend to walk with you in the Park this afternoon, he should gravely reply, Good Sir, I cannot possibly tell you, for the present moment only is in our power ; my future actions depend upon my future volitions, and the Will cannot act upon itself, nor is what

I shall do five hours hence the subject of my present option: you would think he bantered you, and be apt to cry, Pr'ythee cannot you choofe either to walk, or let it alone, cannot you tell me whether you will or no?

Therefore unless we will talk in a strain contrary to the language and conceptions of all mankind, we must acknowledge that a person in the case before us has a perfect freedom of choice. But wherein does this freedom consist? where, unless in the absence of all impediment, restraint, authority, obligation or force whatsoever against his power of choofing; so that his choice will continue such as he fixes it, and his afternoon's actions follow precisely according to his present determination; nor has it any thing to do with the motives or causes inducing him to choofe riding rather than walking, or staying at home before both.

But we have not done yet; for some there be who insist upon an elective Power consubstisting with our power of Volition, and determining it as well in giving the preference to what we are to do hereafter, as in the present exercise of our bodily powers. Be it so, since they will have it so. Then the freedom of this elective Power depends upon the removal of all force or impediment against the Will taking such determination as is elected, but not
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at all upon the cause of such election. Add further, that when we do what we had elected or determined before-hand, nobody will deny our being free in the volitions exerted at the time of execution: which proves Freedom consistent with Precausation, for otherwise either our Election and Predetermination must have no avail nor influence upon our future conduct, or else must put a force upon the Will, constraining it to act conformably to them until they were completed.

17. Thus how many powers soever we may conceive in the mind directing one another, the proper and genuine idea of Freedom, with respect to each of them, will be the same: for in order to discuss the point of freedom, we must consider some operating power as the cause, and some exertion of the power operated upon as an effect to be produced thereby: if such effect will follow as may be expected from the cause, then are we free in the operating power, and our exertion of the operated is our own free act; but if a different effect will follow, then are we under force or restraint.

If we enquire further whether we be free to use this operating power, this is a new question which must be discussed in like manner with the former, by considering the

operating power as an effect, and some other power not thought of before as a cause.

For let the mind have ever so much power to act upon herself, either by predetermination, or coexistent election, such her acting is an action as much as acting upon the limbs, and the freedom of it must be tried by the same rules: for as I have freedom of action so long as there lies no bar or obstacle against using my bodily powers in such manner as my Will shall direct, whatever causes may incline me to employ them one particular way; so have I freedom of Will while nothing hinders, but that such volition shall take place as I predetermine or elect, whatever may give occasion to my so determining or electing. For Liberty bears no connection with any thing antecedent to the operation of that power whose liberty we enquire into, but solely with what shall follow after it, and with the removal of all obstruction which might prevent it from taking effect: therefore may well consist with causes prior to such operation, and with the dominion of that Providence whose disposal those causes lie under.

Thus while we can keep a Disputant to any one settled point, one stated case of acting, or willing, we shall manage well enough with him; but men are apt to dodge about
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the post, alledging, that we may will as we choose, and choose if we will, without understanding themselves in the use of those terms, or settling the distinction between them; but one moment taking them for synonymous, and the next for different acts producing one another. Whereas if we fix the meaning of choice to a predetermination, then in such cases where our determination stands confined to certain limits, or we are compelled to take a course contrary to that we determine, our volitions, and consequently our actions depend upon the causes applying such force or restraint: but in cases where we remain perfectly free to prosecute whatever we may determine upon, they depend upon the motives occurring to our judgement, or imagination in making the determination, or upon our former cares in forming the condition of our mind; which cares depended upon the like causes, and so on as far as the Will was concerned, until you come to some first determination, or act of the mind to which there was none other act preceding; which act must depend upon external causes; and consequently so must all subsequent volitions dependent thereon.

18. As to the coexistent elective power, self-moving and independent on all causes, whether of external objects, motives of judgement

ment and imagination, or prior determinations of our own, if this could once be well established, then farewell to all prudence, deliberation, and dependence upon our own conduct, and that of other people: for what avails it to contrive a plan of my measures ever so wisely, to inculcate salutary maxims upon my mind, to nourish sentiments of honour, or duty, or moral senses for my guidance, if I may afterwards chance to elect the wildest, and most extravagant actions in defiance of all reason, or inclination, or former resolutions to the contrary? or how can I depend that my best and dearest friend will not murder me, while there is a hazard that he may elect in opposition to all the judgment and discretion in his head, the sentiments and desires in his heart?

But such terrors as these the most zealous devotees of an elective power do not lie under; they depend upon men's acting conformably to their characters; if they know a hardened villain, they make no question of his electing acts of violence, injury and dishonesty whenever opportunity shall serve, and confide in themselves for making just and wise elections in their future conduct.

What then occasions the difference between man and man? for there must be some cause of the moral character, some account
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to be given why we know what use each person will make of his elective power. The difference, say they, lies in the Will itself, which has a peculiar bent, or ply, or I know not what, different from that of another person: the villain has a perverseness of Will, therefore will always choose perversely; and they themselves a rectitude of Will, so of course they will choose rightly and wisely. But whence got they this I know not what in their Will? was it innate? was it the natural constitution of their mind? Then they ought to bless the Author of their nature, who gave them this happy constitution on creating them. But no, this must not be the case; for they will lose all merit of their rectitude, unless it was of their own acquiring; therefore they gave this right Ply to their Wills themselves by their former cares, and industry, and right management of their elective power. Be it so; for we are in the humour to admit every thing they please to assume; still we must ask, what moved them to such right management? it could not be the Ply of their Will; for if this were acquired, they could not have it before they acquired it, nor could they derive from thence their choice of the right methods taken in the acquisition. What then, did they light upon those methods by mere chance?

chance? I do not suspect they will say this; for this would make Virtue nothing more than a lucky hit, which one Simpleton might stumble upon as well as another. If then their choice had a source, there remains none other we can guess besides education, example, company, the temperament of their body, state of their mental organization, objects surrounding them, events touching their notice, and the like; causes antecedent and external to the mind electing, under the direction of that power whom they must acknowledge to govern all things external.

19. Upon the whole, we may conclude Freedom, in whatever light we place it, or to whatever power, whether real or imaginary, apply it, by no means repugnant to the operation of prior causes moving us to the exercise of that power; nor to the dominion of Providence, having all those causes and their causes at disposal: so that the Plan of Providence may well take effect without infringing a tittle upon our Liberty. Events which neither our judgement, nor our appetite would incline us to produce, are placed out of our power, and entrusted in the hands of other agents, so come to pass by necessity with respect to us; the returns of summer and winter do not depend upon our option, because we might be apt to choose a perpetual spring:
but

but wherever God thinks proper to employ us in executing any part of his plan, there needs only to give us the powers, the talents, the opportunities, the judgements, the motives requisite, and we shall compleat the lines allotted us by the exercise of our freedom.

So far as you can penetrate into a man's sentiments, and desires, and have the proper objects at command, you may put him upon any work you shall require : if money be his idol, and you have enough to bribe him, you may make him do whatever you please ; if he make his belly his god, you may draw him from Millbank to Radcliffe-highway by an exquisite entertainment ; or if good nature be his ruling principle, you may employ him in any kind office you shall want. Your politicians know how to turn the passions of men independent on their authority to serve their designs : and the Divine Politician may do this more compleatly, not only as he knows perfectly the secrets of all hearts, but as he gave them that understanding and those appetites, which determine the colour of their actions ; and we need not doubt of his having given them such as will effectually answer the purposes intended by them.

In some few instances where we know the hearts of men, we can effect our purposes
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with them as surely as we can with any corporeal instruments in our hands : if you want to give a ball, or an entertainment, 'tis but sending an invitation to persons fond of these diversions, and you will have your company resort to you of their own free choice, nor could you bring them more effectually, if you had the authority of an absolute monarch over them ; so that in this instance you govern their motions either to Hickford's, or the Apollo near Temple Bar, or your own dining-room, without the least impeachment of their liberty. And we have a present example before our eyes of a monarch, who having the love of his subjects, can by their free services resist the combined efforts of the mightiest despotic powers upon earth. Nor can Despotism itself do any great matters without aid of Free Will : for rewards, honours, and encouragements, those engines of free agency, contribute more to the valour of armies, than any scourges of punishment, or peremptory edicts concluding, For such is our Will.

Since then experience testifies, that man can make so much use of liberty towards accomplishing his designs, why should we scruple to think the same of God in a larger extent ? for he not only has all the objects in his power which touch the springs of action, but
fabricated

fabricated the springs themselves, and set them to receive what touches they shall take.

But we judge of the workings of Providence by our own narrow way of proceeding; we take our measures from time to time as the expedience of them occurs to our thoughts, and then must make what use we can of the materials or instruments before us, be they such as exactly suit our purpose, or not; and even if we had the making of our instruments, yet not always knowing what we shall want to do with them, we should often find them inconvenient for our service: nor is it unfrequent that the works we performed yesterday stand in the way of those we are to perform to-day, because new schemes and new occasions of employing ourselves occur to us perpetually.

In like manner we vulgarly imagine God acting occasionally, and taking up purposes he had not thought of before until a concurrence of circumstances rendered them expedient. We apprehend him as having turned the numerous race of men loose into the wide world, endowed them with various powers, talents, appetites, and characters, without knowing precisely, or without caring what they will produce. We allow him indeed to have formed the main lines of a plan; but left large vacancies between to be filled up by chance,

chance, whose wild workings lie under his controul to divert their course when they would interfere with the strokes of his pencil. For the eye of Providence watches over the motions of human creatures, when he sees them running counter to his designs, he turns them aside, or guides them by his secret influence to cooperate therewith.

Now considering the vast variety of humours, the discordant aims and interests among mankind, it must be acknowledged that the government of the world, in this view of it, could not be administered without either continual miraculous interpositions in the motions of matter; or compulsions and restraints upon free Agency, giving our volition another turn than it would take from the motives present before us, or causing other motions to arise in our limbs, and thoughts in our minds, than our present volition would naturally produce.

But when we reflect that even the wanton gambols of chance must result from agents and causes originally set at work by the Almighty, when we call to mind his infinite Wisdom and Omniscience which nothing can escape, nothing perplex or overload; it seems more congruous with that boundless attribute to imagine that no single, nor most distant effect of the powers and motions he gave was overlooked,

overlooked, no chasms or empty spaces left in his design: but that upon the formation of a world he laid a full and perfect plan of all the operations that should ensue during the period of its continuance.

And what interpositions there are (for I would leave every one to his own opinion concerning the frequency, or rarity of them,) how much soever they may operate secretly to us, were not sudden expedients to answer unforeseen emergencies, but contained in the original plan; which was purposely so framed as to need his interposing hand when, and where, and as often as he predetermined to apply to it. But in those parts wherein he has thought proper to employ us as his instruments for executing them, to controul us in the exercise of our powers would be to defeat his own designs, by disturbing the operation of those causes himself had chosen for the accomplishment of them.

Thus he governs all things in heaven and earth by power and wisdom conjointly; matter by necessity and impulse, brutes by sense and instinct, the blessed spirits above by significations of his Will, which they gladly and freely set themselves to fulfil, man partly by necessary agents affecting him, partly by laws, restrictions, apprehensions of mischief

mischief and danger controuling him, and partly by leaving him to his free choice in following such portion of understanding and appetites as himself has allotted him.

21. Nor need we fancy ourselves always in shackles, because every moment under the dominion and conduct of Providence; for it has been shown that Liberty has no concern with causes antecedent to the exercise of our power, but solely with what might stand in our way upon such exercise: if I can do what I will, I have freedom of action, no matter how I came to will this or that particular employment: if I can choose as I will, I have freedom of choice, no matter what induced me to make one choice preferably to all others.

What then, are we mere puppets, actuated by springs and wires, because it was given us both to will and to do? By no means; for when they are given us, we have as full and free liberty to use them both, as if they had fallen upon us by chance, or we had made them for ourselves. If my father left me a good portion, I can do the same with it, and have as free disposal of it, as if I had made the gold myself by transmutation with the Philosopher's stone: and if he brought me by the cares of his education from a lavish temper to prudence and œconomy,

æconomy, this does not impeach my liberty to squander it all away.

Nor have we reason to disturb ourselves with imaginations of a thralldom from secret influences, and unseen springs, when those that are manifest and seen do not work upon us by constraint; for sometimes we may discern the influence that guides us, and yet find no thralldom in following whither it leads.

How much of our employment depends upon the natural appetites of hunger and thirst? You may pretend indeed that these are acts of necessity, because he must eat, or starve: but follow men to their meals, and you will not see one in a thousand that eats because he must, but because he likes it. Which of us ever sits down to table by compulsion, or feels himself constrained to cut the joint before him, or perceives his tongue moved by strings like a puppet when he calls for a glass of wine?

What shall we say to the mutual propensity between the sexes, another main spring in the hand of God, by which he preserves the race of men upon earth? How many under twigs, what fashions, contrivances, amusements, accomplishments, grow from that stem? but wherein does it check or overshadow human liberty? Do boys and girls meet together by compulsion, or choice?

Is the Miss under a force when she culls among her trinkets with curious toil to tiff herself out in the most engaging manner, or teazes pappas for money to buy a new-fashioned filk? Is the Beau compelled against his Will to practise winning airs before the glass, or employ for whole hours all the thought within his noddle to bepowder and becurl the outside?

How strongly does paternal instinct operate upon us! 'Tis by this channel that God transmits arts and sciences, education, estates, conveniences of life, knowledge, and old experience from generation to generation. In this we see the finger of Providence and feel its potent touches, yet feel no limitation in our liberty therefrom: for what parent does not willingly go about the provisions he makes for his children, or finds himself under any other direction than his own choice and judgement in the application of his cares for their advantage, or perceives himself moved by clock-work to procure any little toy, or diversion for them?

22. Our powers of action stand limited to a certain extent of ground, but within the enclosure we may ramble about as we please to take our pasture, or our pastime. Sometimes there are restraints hanging over us, which confine us to particular walks; obligations
and

and duties to be fulfilled, authority to be obeyed, wants to be supplied, necessaries of life to be provided, and it behoves us to regard these restrictions, or mischief will ensue: but in many of our hours we have no limitations upon our conduct, and then we may move easily and lightly without the weight of any secret force or impediment encumbering us.

Nor need we fear lest we may defeat the purposes of God, or make any breaches in the plan of his Providence; for he knew what uses we would make of our Liberty, and has provided his plan accordingly. Let the Princes run madly into broils, and the Grecians suffer, the Will of Jove is fulfilled by their madness, and will be, whatever conduct man shall pursue. Therefore we have but our own Will to take care of; only let us not consult solely our present Will and Fancy, but pay a due regard to what we may will to-morrow; and in our deliberations and execution of the prudential measures for procuring what we shall will to have another time, we may proceed with the same freedom as if there were no superiour power able to controul us in the exercise of our faculties.

And the most useful deliberation we can enter upon, is how to enlarge our freedom,

for all are ready enough to allow that Happiness consists in liberty to do what we will ; nor shall I contradict them, so they do not restrain Will to that of the present moment. We commonly understand by our Will what our Judgement represents as most eligible, or our Inclination prompts to as most alluring ; and whenever these two coincide, our Will is quite free. Therefore so far as we can bring desire to tally with reason, we shall enlarge the bounds of our liberty ; and if we could do this compleatly so as to make a virtue of every necessity, and a pleasure of every obligation, we should never have any restraint hanging over us, but attain a perfect liberty ; because willing always what was right and feasible, we should always do what we would.

And this perfect liberty would more apparently, though not more really coincide with the plan of Providence than that pittance of it we now possess ; for then we should fulfill the Will of God knowingly, whereas now we fulfill it, but unknowingly, and many times by setting ourselves most strenuously to oppose it.

23. And now we might think the controversy ended, and all difficulties gotten over, the freedom of Will being fully reconciled with the authority and dominion of God :
but

but the busy mind of man, ingenious in finding new perplexities to involve itself in, will not let us rest quiet so ; but seeing light open upon one spot, shifts the scene to some other corner, where it may cover itself with clouds and obscurity ; and as if fond of slavery, endeavours to derive a title thereto from another quarter, namely, that of Foreknowledge.

For, say the fine Reasoners, if your actions are foreknown, you can do no otherwise than it is known you will do ; so your hands are tied down to one particular manner of proceeding, nor are you at liberty to take any other than that you shall pursue.

But why so ? what connection is there between another's knowledge, and my behaviour ? it may possibly direct his own measures, but has no influence at all upon mine. You allow that while my actions remain unknown to every body I may be free ; what then if after my being in possession of this freedom some shrewd Politician should discover what I will do, how does that divest me of it, in what respect alter my condition, or by what channel of communication does his discovery operate upon me.

No, say they, you mistake the grounds of our objection ; we do not assign his knowledge as a cause of any thing you do, nor pretend it lays any restraint upon your liberty ;

we only produce it as an evidence of another restraint hanging over you ; for he could not know how you will behave, unless it were certain ; therefore his knowledge is a proof that you will certainly do as he knows ; but what will certainly come to pass cannot fall out otherwise ; so you have no liberty left, because you cannot do what will never be done.

But how does this alter the case ? wherein is the difference between Certainty and Knowledge ? Why yes, the difference lies here, that Certainty is the object of Knowledge, though she may not have cast her eye upon it ; therefore is a different thing, as having existed before it ; for his discovery did not make the Certainty, but presupposes it ; for the thing was certain before, though he did not know it.

But what sort of thing is this Certainty to which you ascribe such irresistible force ? let us know what rank of Beings to place it under ? is it a substance ? or if a quality or accident, in what substance does it reside ? for we generally apply it to propositions which are only judgements of the mind. It is no agent, it is no power, nor has any efficacy in its state of pre-existence to knowledge ; for were it ever so certain the house was on fire, this

this would influence none of my actions until I know it.

24. If Certainties have any active virtue, it is to generate one another; all our rules of logic show that some truths are such in consequence of other truths: if it certainly will rain to-morrow, it is certain there will be clouds in the air; if it be certain the gun I make tryal of will go off, then the flint will certainly strike fire; and in general the certainty of Events infers the certainty of all causes operating to produce them: therefore whatever acts of my Freewill are certain, I must certainly have the freedom to do them.

We may indeed frame propositions concerning future events, without thinking of the manner how they will come to pass; but remember your own observation, that knowledge does not make certainty, but finds it; much less can any form of words make, or the omission of them destroy it: therefore whether you speak and think of them or no, the same propositions may be applied, and the same certainty belong to the operating causes, be they Force or Freewill, as to the events, and the certainty of each reciprocally, implies the other.

Suppose you under an engagement to meet a person at any particular place, and have a
strong

strong inclination to go somewhere else, nevertheless you have too much honour to break your word; but perhaps the man will send five minutes hence to release you from the engagement, and then you will go where you like: now if it be certain you shall go there, must it not be equally certain the restraint will be taken off, and you set at perfect liberty to follow your choice? And if any body had affirmed both a thousand years ago, he would have spoken truth; for while the one remained fortuitous, the other could not be certain: so likewise in all instances of free Agency, the certainty of the action casts a certainty upon the freedom of the Agent; and the certain Foreknowledge of our voluntary proceedings is so far from overthrowing, that it establishes human liberty upon a firmer bottom than it has really belonging to it.

For we may observe further, that this argument unluckily proves too much; because if whatever shall happen it be absolutely impossible that it should not happen; then in such instances wherein we have our freedom, the debarring us the use of it was from all eternity an absolute impossibility, insurmountable even by Omnipotence itself; so that instead of being dependent in all our motions upon necessary causes, we shall be-

come

come independent on the first, the supreme Fountain of all power and action.

And for ought I know, the Devil might have employed this sophism when he rebelled, to prove himself his own master; for feeling himself in possession of freedom, it was always true, that he should be free; nor could Omnipotence itself prevent his being so: or he might have beguiled himself into his fall, and justified his disobedience, by arguing in the following manner. If any one had said before I was made, that I should be, he would have spoken truth; therefore it was certain that I should be, therefore an absolute impossibility that I should not be; so God could not help creating me, nor do I owe any thanks to the Almighty for my existence.

25. What dependence or countenance does this argument deserve? which is such a Drawcansir as to cut down both friend and foe; or like a swivel gun, may be pointed upon any quarter, fore and aft, starboard and larboard; and what is worse, we find it generally in the hands of sloth and depravity, turned against the lawful authority of reason and prudence.

For when men are too lazy to bestir themselves, or too fond of a foolish thing to be put aside from it by their clearest judgement, they

they then catch hold of this idle pretence, what will be, must be ; therefore why need I take pains, or deliberate at all ? for my actions will have some certain issue, and if certain, it is necessary, and if necessary, the event will work itself out some how or other, without my giving myself any trouble to compass it.

But who ever argues in this manner, when they have some favourite passion to gratify ? They then can study and contrive, set all their wits to work, and use all their might to accomplish their designs : whereas if they think consistently, there is the same certainty in matters of inclination, as of prudence and duty ; whatever they wish, must have some certain issue one way or other, and is either unattainable in spite of their utmost endeavours, or will drop into their mouths without their seeking. And thus they may go on to argue themselves out of all activity whatever, so as neither to take up the victuals from their plate, or move away from the fire when it burns their shins.

26. But these fantastical remoras do not obstruct us in the familiar transactions of life, nor do they ever enter into the head of a common man. If a poor fellow has done me some signal service, and I call to him—Hark ye, Tim ; do you see that sack of pease
in

in the barn-floor yonder? there are a couple of guineas in it somewhere; if you can find them they are your own. Now I know well enough he will get the money; for he will take out every pea one by one but he will come at it; but I know as well that he cannot find it without a great deal of pains and rummaging.

Suppose one of your profound Speculatists were by, and should tell him, Why, Tim, you need not put yourself in a hurry to go a rummaging; you may as well sit with your nose over the kitchen fire; for Search knows you will get the money; therefore it is a thing certain, and you must have it whether you do any thing, or no. This logic would hardly prevail upon Tim to stop his speed for a moment.

Or suppose another subtle refiner sets the matter in a different light: Tim, says he, is a mere machine in this case utterly destitute of liberty; for not only his getting the money, but his rummaging the sack is fore-known; so his action is certain and necessary, not can he help rummaging any more than the great clock can help striking. Tim being an arch fellow replies, Ay, but Master, for all that I could stay here and never meddle with the sack, if I were fool enough to run the hazard of somebody else getting

getting away the money before me ; and if you'll give me three and forty shillings to try, I'll show you what I can do.

How many times a day do we foreknow our own actions, and those of other people, yet feel ourselves and perceive them free in the performance ? Our liberty is so apparent that the Philosopher with his microscope, and the Ploughman with his half an eye, can discern it distinctly through the veil of Certainty and Foreknowledge : 'tis only the half-reasoner, who hangs between both, and uses a glass full of flaws, that hunts for it in vain, or sees it confusedly.

27. It is the crinkles in this glass making objects appear double, and representing each individual as two distinct things, which produces that distinction urged by some people between human Prescience and divine, as if one might be compatible with human Liberty, though the other were repugnant.

But why so ? for it is not the party knowing, but the intrinsic certainty of the fact that lays the restraint : now as man cannot know what is uncertain, so neither if there were any thing absolutely fortuitous, could it be foreknown even to God ; therefore Knowledge, wherever residing, is alike evidence of Certainty.

Very

Very true, say they, where the knowledge is of the same kind; but our's is only conjectural; whereas that of God is absolute: we all confess the human Understanding fallible at best, nor ever so sure of her hits, but there remains a possibility of her being mistaken; and it is this possibility that opens the door to Liberty.

Here, by the way, I cannot help remarking how ready some folks are to blow hot and cold with the same breath, as either serves the turn: if I happen in company to drop a hint like those suggested in my chapter on judgement, that Certainty, mathematical Certainty, was not made for man, and that we know no more, if so much, than the appearances exhibited this present moment to our senses, and the ideas actually in our thought; I am exclaimed against for an arrant Sceptic, a Visionary, a Trifler, advancing things I do not believe myself. What! cry they, do not we know certainly that the Judges will sit in Westminster-hall this term; that the servant will lay the cloth for dinner; that we ourselves shall go to bed to-night? Yet these very people, like crafty Politicians, now the interests of their argument require it, can take the opposite side, and strike up a coalition with the fallibility of human understanding in its strongest assurances

assurances. Perhaps the Judges will not sit, for the hall may be swallowed up by an earth-quake; perhaps the Servant will not lay the cloth, for he may be stricken with an apoplexy; perhaps we shall not go to bed, for the house may take fire. Were these casualties, which depend upon external causes, alledged in diminution of Liberty, they might carry some weight; but what efficacy they can have to encrease it, I cannot discern with the best use of the microscope.

But waving this, if bare Possibility may give opening enough to set us free, this same Mr. Liberty must be a very slender gentleman, to creep in at such an augur-hole: yet let us consider whether he does get his whole body through, or only thrust in a little finger at most; for we have seen there are degrees of Liberty consistent with a partial Restraint. When I put on my great coat and boots, I can still move my limbs, though not so freely as before: when in town I have not the same liberty as in the country; I must not go out in my cap and slippers; I must not carry a bundle under my arm; if Elizabetha Petrowna, whom I never saw nor cared for, happens to die two thousand miles off, I must not wear a coloured coat, for so the great goddess, Fashion, that Diana of Ephesus, whom all the world worshippeth, ordains; yet she
graciously

graciously allows me some latitude in my dress and motions; for I may go armed with a sword I know not how to use, and faunter away the day in coffee-houses, or spend the night in tossing about a pack of cards, without offence to her delicacy.

Now I believe my antagonists and I, how slightly soever we have spoken of human Understanding, shall agree that in some instances our Knowledge grounds upon evidence, which makes it a million to one we are in the right: and since an Event may be probable, as well as certain, though we do not know so much, it must then contain an intrinsic probability independent on our knowledge or conjecture. But this probability, being so near of kin to certainty, that the acutest Philosophers could never find a criterion to distinguish them, may be presumed to have the family strength, though not in equal measure; and if one totally overthrows liberty, the other must fasten a clog upon it proportionable to the degree of the probability; so that in cases of the highest assurance we should find ourselves reduced to the condition of a person who should have so many weights hung about him, that one millionth part added more, would render him incapable of stirring at all.

28. But if this will not do, and they insist upon Probability being totally different from Certainty in kind and efficacy, and that one has no force at all, though the other be irresistible, let them contemplate an object, wherein they must needs acknowledge both perpetual Freedom and absolute Foreknowledge; for I hope they will not deny God to be perfectly free in all his proceedings. If there be such a thing in nature as freedom, where can it reside, if not in the supreme Author of all powers to whom there is nothing superior that might controul him? Yet I suppose they will scarce imagine all his measures sudden, and his actions fortuitous, or that he does not know to-day what he will do to-morrow.

But if certainty infers necessity, then either he foresees no better than we do, that is conjecturally, when he will stop the torrents of blood that overwhelm Europe, the distresses, the ruins, the havock and desolation that spread over land and sea, and restore peace to Christendom; or his hands in the interim remain tied to do it at one precise time, nor is he at liberty to advance the happy event one moment sooner. Nay, we shall not stop here; for if a proposition had been affirmed from everlasting concerning any work of Providence that has been performed, it would have

have been true: therefore God from all eternity was necessitated to create and govern his worlds precisely in the manner he has done; and so, according to the devilish fine reasoning used at the end of §. 24. we are not obliged to him, but to the iron-handed goddess Necessity, for our life, our health, our daily bread, and all the blessings we receive.

Perhaps they will alledge the case is different here; for the acts of God are such only as he had determined upon himself, therefore in performing them he executed his own Will: but let them remember, that they placed the necessity in the intrinsic certainty of the fact, not in the causes operating to produce it; for if they admit these, then the cause of our free actions being the freedom we have to perform them, will evidence itself, instead of proving our bondage: but, according to them, when a fact is certain, it is necessary, no matter why, or how, it came to be so; and equally certain, whether proceeding from the agent's own determination or some external cause: for if what will be, must be, then whatever God foreknows will be done by himself as well as by us, becomes alike certain, nor can even omnipotence prevent it from taking effect. Let them consider further that every pious man esteems it certain, that

God will reward the good and punish the evil-doer ; that he will maintain the laws of nature, not throw all things into confusion nor annihilate the Beings he has created. Thus human prescience extends in some cases to the divine agency. But if certainty inferred necessity, then either God must not be free to dispose of us in what manner he judges proper, or it must remain totally uncertain how he will use his power.

Thus we see the same ill luck attends the argument wherever we turn it; for if it proves any thing, it proves more than it should; nor can it infringe upon human liberty, without encroaching upon God himself.

Neither let them throw in my teeth what I have reported from Pythagoras concerning the oath of Jove ; for this was only a figurative expression, to denote the unchangeableness of the divine nature : if God has sworn, his oath is sacred, because we know he will keep it, being not liable, like man, to change his sentiments, or design one thing to-day and the contrary to-morrow ; but nobody imagines him under any compulsion or necessity, in case he could be supposed at any time desirous of violating it ; so that when he performs, he acts with the same pure bounty and unlimited freedom as when he promises.

29. When

29. When we examine what gave rise to this notable discovery of every thing certain being necessary, we shall find it spring from a mere quibble of words. What you will do, say they, you must do; for you cannot do otherwise so long as you are to do that, because you cannot do both. Who doubts it? Therefore I allow this to be a matter of necessity, not of prudence; nor would I recommend it to any man to deliberate, or make trial, how he shall run and sit still at the same time, or ride on horseback while he goes in a coach: but for all that, what ails him that he might not omit the thing he has resolved upon, or will do, and take a contrary course? How sure soever I am of going to bed, still I may sit up all night, if I please, for neither God nor man hinders me; but I know I shall not, because I know it is in my option, and know what I choose to do: so my knowledge stands upon my freedom; for if I had it not, I might be compelled to do what I do not chuse, and my action would be uncertain.

But my Knowledge they say is only conjectural. What then? does not God know it too? and does not he know likewise, that he has left the issue to my option? and whether he has given me so much discretion as will withhold me from doing a silly thing merely to show what I can do? So these three

points of Knowledge, the Discretion, the Liberty to use it, and the Event, are so far from overthrowing that they sustain and strengthen one another.

The difficulties we make spring from our conceiving too narrowly of the divine prescience; we consider God as foreknowing an event separately, without knowing, or without contemplating the causes giving it birth: in this case indeed the Foreknowledge must have a something, an inexplicable fatality attending it, for else it could not be absolute, because there might some unforeseen cause intervene to render it abortive. But the prescience of God is universal as well as absolute; when he knows what will come to pass, he knows the causes himself has provided for accomplishing it, nor can any body who considers the matter at all, imagine him ever ignorant or forgetful of either; nay, he knows the one, because he knows the other; for if we could suppose him ignorant of the causes, he would not know their issue. Therefore in such instances where freedom is one of those causes, he foreknows that freedom, the motives inclining us to use it, and how those motives will operate; and consequently by the rule insisted on, it is as necessary we should enjoy that freedom, as in what manner we shall employ it.

30. Nevertheless

30. Nevertheless they go on still to urge, that we cannot do otherwise than we shall do, not only because we cannot do both, but because we cannot omit what we certainly shall do, and take another course: for an event that will certainly happen, cannot fail of coming to pass, nor can the contrary take effect; but the divine prescience is an irrefragable evidence of this certainty, because if the thing were uncertain, the Foreknowledge could not be absolute. Now there is no possibility that God should be mistaken; therefore none that any thing foreknown by him should not take effect, or the contrary should fall out; then it is not possible for us to omit whatever it is impossible should fail of being done; so our power is gone; or if we have a natural ability either to do or to omit, we have no liberty to use it, being confined to that particular way which is foreknown.

Now if they will please to throw this curious reasoning into the logical form of a syllogism, we may chance to show them it has four terms, and therefore concludes nothing. Whatever God foreknows, it is impossible the contrary should be done; what is impossible to be done, it is out of my power to do; therefore whatever God foreknows, it is out of my power to do the contrary.

I shall not deny major nor minor ; but if the word impossible should carry different senses as it stands in either, the whole chain will become a rope of sand, and the consequence limp lame behind. In order to canvas this point, let us have recourse to our present patroness Philology, to mark out the several uses wherein we employ that term, together with others relative thereto, such as, must, may, can, necessary, and the like, both in our familiar and serious discourses.

Possible, relates originally and most obviously to Power ; for things are possible as far as we have power to perform them, but no farther : and if it be asked, Whether it is possible to transmute lead into gold ? you will understand by the question, whether it is in the power of man, by chymical process, or any other art or contrivance, to effect it.

But we often apply the term where we have nothing of power in our thoughts. Suppose, in playing at whist, I have only two cards left in my hand, but must win both tricks to save the game ; my partner leads a trump, and the king was turned up on my left hand ; in this case I shall put down the ace with hopes of succeeding, because it is possible the king may be alone. Now by possible, I do not mean in the power of any body, or any thing, to make the king alone,
or

or guarded : if chance ever had any power, she has executed it as soon as the cards were shuffled and cut, nor has she now any further concern in the affair. Therefore here the term denotes only the contingency of what other card lies in the same hand with the king, and is relative ; for to him who holds the cards it is not possible they should be any other than what he sees them, though to me who do not see them, guarded or not guarded are equally possible.

On the other hand, whoever considers the pains I have taken on this crabbed subject, will think it impossible I should throw my labours into the fire as soon as I have completed them : not that he thinks any thing of my powers, or supposes me to plod on until my arm is so benumbed that I cannot extend it to the grate ; or that I write upon cloth of asbestos, which will not consume in the Flames ; but because he thinks there is no chance I should instantly destroy what I have been so earnest to produce.

Thus Possible sometimes denotes the Power or Liberty we have to do a thing, as Impossible does the want of it, and sometimes only the contingency, or our knowledge or ignorance of an event, without the least reference to the powers producing it. There may be different degrees of possibility in what manner

ner I shall spend my afternoon, according as people know more or less of my character, disposition, or ways of employing my time; but my power and my liberty must be the same, whatever other folks may think of me, or though there should be a hundred different opinions or degrees of knowledge about me. If I am under engagement to go with another whither he wants me, and somebody asks which way I am bound, I may say, 'tis possible to the Exchange, or 'tis possible to St. James's; but this leaves me no more at liberty than if it were absolutely impossible that one of them should not be the place. Or if I want to speak with a person whom I know not readily where he is, but am so sure of finding him, that I say it is impossible but I must see him; this does not abridge or any ways alter the liberty I should have to pursue or forbear my enquiries, were it possible my endeavours might prove ineffectual.

It avails nothing to tell us, that our knowledge at best can amount only to the highest probability of conjecture; for our business now lies with the propriety of language, and natural import of those expressions, wherein we use the words Possible or Impossible. Whatever refined notions we may have in our closets, we leave them behind, and take up common conceptions when we go abroad
upon

upon our common transactions: be our clearest knowledge ever so conjectural, we esteem it certain upon these occasions. Which of us in setting out upon a visit, a diversion, or an affair of business, apprehends a possibility of not arriving at the place of his destination: yet at the same time does not apprehend himself at liberty to alter his course in any part of his progress? but if the impossibility of an event failing, implied necessity in the agent, the idea of such impossibility, however erroneous, yet while entertained, must banish the idea of freedom; but whether it does so, I appeal to the judgement and hourly experience of all mankind. And if our Antagonists have found a new sense in the word Impossible, unknown to the rest of the world, they will do well to explain their idea in a manner enabling us to understand their peculiar meaning.

To consider the other words of the like import, we say it may rain, or be fair tomorrow; and when we say this, we think nothing of any choice in the clouds, or the air to produce either weather, as the word naturally implies; for what we may do lies in our option to do, or to forbear. And it is one thing, when speaking of a prisoner for debt, for whom we have just procured a release, we say, Now he may go home to his family; and

and quite another, when speaking of a person gone out upon a tour of diversion, we say, He may come home to day: in one case, May expresses the liberty he has to do as he likes: in the other, it denotes only the chance there is in what manner he will use his liberty; for though I should know the released debtor will not go home, still I shall think he may if he will; but if I know the traveller's intention to stay out longer, I shall not think it possible he may come home to-day.

Nor should we scruple to use the word Can upon this occasion; for if we judge it not possible that he may come, it is the same thing as believing it certain he cannot come, yet without idea of any imbecillity or restraint to prevent him.

So likewise Must and Necessary, considered by themselves, imply a force compelling to one particular action, or an unsurmountable bar against all others: if I must attend upon a tryal, I am not at liberty to stay away; if my health renders exercise necessary, I must go abroad some how or other, and in that case am necessitated to walk when debarred the use of all conveyances. But suppose a friend has some business with me, which requires no sort of haste, but I know he loves to take the first convenient opportunity for dispatching
whatever

whatever he has to do : upon being asked when I expect to see him, I may say, perhaps not to-day, nor to-morrow, nor all this week ; but I think he must necessarily come before the month is out.

Nor do we scruple applying the same terms to things inanimate, which though really necessary agents, we generally conceive and speak of as having powers and liberty. Water compressed in a fire engine must necessarily rush through the spout, being forced to mount upwards against its nature, and because it can find none other vent. But if a careless servant does not mind to thrust the spigot fast into the barrel, the beer must necessarily run all away : in using this expression, we think nothing of the force of gravitation impelling bodies downwards, but only the certainty of the mischief ensuing which we apprehend ; for that the liquor being left to its liberty will follow the natural propensity it has to descend, and will exert a power to drive away the loose spigot obstructing its passage.

31. Any body with a little attention, may recollect a thousand instances wherein the impossibility of an event not coming to pass, implies no more than a denial of all hazard that it may not come to pass ; which is neither an affirmation nor denial of power or freedom

freedom in the causes bringing it forth to produce the contrary. Therefore in cases where we need not, or lie under no necessity of doing a thing, where we can, and may, and it is easily possible for us to act differently; yet we may be so sure of our measures as that they must necessarily take effect, that they cannot, there is an impossibility they should fail of succeeding, or we should omit to employ them; which latter impossibility is a foundation strong enough to support the highest degree of Foreknowledge, and consequently Foreknowledge may well be absolute without putting a force upon us, or cramping us the least in our liberty.

Thus have I endeavoured to rescue mankind from slavery, from the dread of force, restraint and controul hanging continually over them, not like Epicurus by pulling Providence from her throne, and setting up the Anarchy of Chance in her stead; but by showing the consistency of her government with the free use of those powers allotted us, and proving human liberty one of the ministers to execute her purposes.

If the foregoing Observations upon this dark and intricate Subject shall render it intelligible to others, and shall have the same weight upon them as they seem to me to deserve: then in those seasons wherein, as I
may

may say, God gives them a holiday to follow their own inclinations, they will move briskly and chearfully, without thought of any other restraint than, what I hope they will never wish to throw aside, Innocence and Propriety; and when he calls them to his services, if they do but manage to bring their minds into a proper disposition, they will find the performance of them a state of perfect Freedom.

32. Nevertheless we have not done with our Disputants yet, for if we can defend our Liberty against infringement by universal Providence and absolute Foreknowledge, they change their attack upon another quarter, namely, the justice of Reward and Punishment in the situation of mankind we have represented: for, say they, if the Will of God be fulfilled on earth as well as in heaven, who hath ever resisted his Will? why then doth he punish? As to Reward, they find no fault with that being conferred upon them unmerited, so the only difficulty remains with respect to punishment; and in order to answer their question, let us examine what is the proper and natural foundation of Punishment.

Men are apt enough to inflict it for injuries received, with none other view than to wreak their resentment; and the Righteous, when having most compleatly mastered their passions,

sions, still feel an abhorrence rise in their breasts against enormous crimes, although no ways affecting themselves, nor capable of hurting them. What then, is this Resentment and this Abhorrence innate? Suppose they were, yet we cannot ascribe our passions and aversions to the Almighty, or imagine him punishing in order to remove a loathsome object from his sight which it gives him pain to behold. But Mr. Locke has long since exploded the doctrine of innate Ideas, and if the idea of Injury was acquired, those of Resentment and Abhorrence, being its offspring, must be younger.

In our chapter on the Passions we have traced Anger to its origin, and found it derived from Expedience; for children having often relieved themselves from whatever oppressed them by a violent exertion of their power against the cause of it, contract a habit of violence, and practise it afterwards without view to the consequences; satisfaction being translated from the end to the means.

The abhorrence of villainy, as well when proposed to ourselves, as practised by others, is one of the moral senses, which we have shown in the proper place, issue from the same fountain: they may indeed be conveyed to particular persons by education, by precept, by example, and sympathy; but whoever ac-
quired

quired them first, learned them by observation of their necessary tendency to good order and happiness, and by experience of the mischiefs resulting from those practises they would restrain. The frequent view of these good effects casts a value upon the sentiments producing them, and the translation being once compleatly made, desire fixes upon them as upon its ultimate object.

We find judgement does the same with respect to truth translated from the Postulata to the Problem demonstrated: the equality between the squares of the two sides and hypotenuse in a rectangular triangle, serves for a basis in mathematical and mechanical operations without our running back perpetually through the whole process whereby Euclid convinced us of its being a truth. In like manner when our moral senses are grown vigorous, we follow their impulse without thinking of any higher principle first recommending them, and many of us without acknowledging any such principle.

Now I would not by any means lessen their influence, I rather wish it were stronger than it is, for we very seldom stand in a situation to discern the expedience of our actions, nor, where it lies any thing remote, have we strength of mind enough to pursue it; but these moral senses serve as excellent guides to

direct, and spurs to stimulate us towards the attainment of a happiness that would otherwise escape us. Nevertheless it must be owned they partake of the nature of passion, having the like qualities, the like vehemence and manner of operation, and may be stiled virtuous appetites, as being the produce of reason and industry rather than of nature. They are to be ranked among the Scyons which Plato told us Urania grafted upon the wild stocks in Psyche's garden; and which his master afterwards put us in mind were apt to run luxuriant, unless kept within bounds by a proper tendance.

Therefore it is one thing to consult our rules of action for shaping our conduct thereby, and another to examine the rules themselves for determining in what manner we shall establish, or rectify them. For as military discipline consists in the strict subordination of the soldiers to the officers, and the officers to the general; so the little state of man is never so well disciplined as when the moral senses have the entire command of our motions, but lie themselves under controul of sober consideration and sound judgement. While in the hurry of action we have not leisure to consult the general, but must push bravely on whither our immediate officers lead us; nor indeed is consultation the business

ness then, but intrepidity, vigour and alertness. Therefore the virtuous man acts because it is right and just, becoming and laudable, and forbears what appears wrong and base, unworthy and shocking to his thought: he follows the motions of zeal, honour, shame, decency, natural affection, civility, as he feels them rise in his breast; or if doubts arise he tries the moral senses by one another, and adheres to that which carries the strongest lustre, and highest excellency in his imagination, without considering further why he suffers himself to be guided by their influence, or whence it was derived. For the greatest part of mankind know not a why nor a whence, but take up their principles partly from their parents and tutors, partly from custom and general estimation; and those who do investigate them to the fountain, cannot carry their investigations in their head upon common occasions.

But in seasons of deliberation, when admitted into the general's tent, having the instructions and intelligences laid before us, and sitting in council upon the operations of the campaign, it would be absurd to take an officer's own testimonial of his merit, or give him his orders because they are such as he is most fond of executing; we are only to regard the public service, what are each man's

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abilities,

abilities, and how he may best conduct himself to promote it. So if we have sufficient lights and opportunity to take our moral senses under examination, in order to moderate what extravagancies they may have run into, or determine the rank among them in the command of our powers; it would be no less preposterous to try their rectitude by what themselves suggest to be right, or to settle their degrees of authority upon any other foundation than their several tendencies towards the general happiness, wherein we shall always find our own contained.

33. Now in matters of punishment, when we have it in our power, let us regard the heinousness of the offence, together with all circumstances that may aggravate or abate our abhorrence of it as beheld by our moral sense: but when we are to examine the foundation we have for entertaining this abhorrence, we shall find none other than the expedience and necessity of punishment to preserve order, and good faith, and honesty among mankind. Even those who take private revenge, when called upon to justify their conduct, always plead that otherwise they should lie open to perpetual insults; which shows that the only reasonable excuse for resentment is not strictly the injury received, but the prevention of injuries for the future. Therefore reason, as
well

well as authority, enjoins us to forgive our brother not only seven times, but until seventy times seven, unless where animadversion is necessary either for our own quiet and benefit, or that of others.

And there is a species of punishment called chastisement, which has none other object beside the benefit of the party upon whom it is exercised. Parents and school-masters may not be displeased at unlucky tricks played by their lads, as showing a sagacity and sprightliness they delight to behold; yet they will not suffer them to pass with impunity, least it should generate idleness and other mischiefs: here is no abhorrence striking the moral sense, nor are the boys disliked the worse for their fallies of youth and ingenuity ill applied; so the chastisement is not for miscarriages committed, but for future enormities which might be committed.

'Tis true the judge passes sentence upon criminals by stated rules, because he is no more than a minister to speak the sense of the law; but the legislature, in establishing the law, regards none other rules than those respecting the public utility; therefore equal punishments are appointed for offences of unequal enormity. For the law hangs for stealing the value of five shillings, but does no more for murder; and some go wholly un-

punished, such as ingratitude, intemperance, entailing diseases or poverty upon families by gallantries or extravagance, because they cannot be enquired into without causing confusion and worse inconveniencies. On the other hand, when the title to a throne is so disputable that many honest well-disposed persons are drawn by mere error of judgement to take part on the unfortunate side; they are adjudged and executed as rebels, because it is necessary to maintain the authority of government, and tranquillity of the state.

34. Should it be objected, that this proves the contrary to what we have laid down, because the law, whose basis is utility, does not govern us in our estimation of Demerit; for we compassionate instead of detesting the deluded malecontent, while we acknowledge the expedience and necessity of the law which condemns him, and think the abandoned debauchée deserving of punishment which the law cannot provide for him; therefore we build our judgement upon other grounds than those of utility. I shall answer, that as the law is not the sole measure of justice, so neither is it the sole fountain of utility: for be the polity of a nation ever so well regulated, or ever so wisely administered, the people must still do something for themselves in order to compleat their happiness; and Providence has reserved

reserved to his own management the putting a check upon some enormities which the law cannot reach, nor human sagacity discover or prevent.

Therefore that utility which the provisions of the law cannot totally compass, may still remain for the foundation of private animadversion and censure : nor is it a small argument of its being so, that we naturally look upon the greatness of mischief done as an aggravation of guilt in the perpetrator. If an unwholesome potion be given to make a man sick for a week, it is an injury ; if it bring on an incurable disease, it is a more heinous offence ; if death ensue, it is the crying sin of murder.

Well, but you say the mischief must be designed, or there will be no crime at all : the greater degree of mischief is only an evidence of deeper blackness in the design ; so that properly speaking, it is not the damage done, but depravity of heart in the doer, which raises your abhorrence and wishes for vengeance ; for when assured of the design, you pronounce the guilt the same, feel the same abhorrence and wish, although its purpose be utterly frustrated, and no damage at all ensue.

Why this is the very thing I have been contending for all along, that the true ground of punishment is not the mischief done, or the

crime committed, but the prevention of future enormities, productive of future mischiefs, and this object I think may fairly rank under the class of utility.

We have found in the former part of this work, that the volitions giving birth to our actions depend upon the present motives occurring to our thought, which are either what our judgement represents as most expedient, or our imagination as most alluring and desirable; and these motives are suggested by the opinions, the sentiments, the inclinations and habits we have contracted; when desire fixes upon practices of pernicious tendency, this is called a Depravity of Mind, or vulgarly, though improperly, a Depravity of Will, by a metonymy of cause for effect, because the state of the mind, and desires in the heart, influence the Will, and of course produce actions conformable thereto; for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Therefore this depravity of heart being productive of bad effects, whenever the season and opportunity serves to bring them to maturity, becomes justly odious upon account of the poisonous fruits it bears. But as punishment, animadversion and censure, being grievous to the party suffering them, tends to dissociate desire from the sentiments whereto they are annexed,

annexed, and work amendment, or in other words, to give men a disgust for the vices rendering them obnoxious thereto; or at least to restrain them from breaking forth into act, and discourage others from entertaining the like; it is this use which renders the punishment merited and just: for I appeal to any considerate person, whether he would punish, or ascribe to a depravity of heart any action, or sentiment whatever, which could never do the least hurt either to the owner, or any person in the world beside.

35. For this reason freedom of action, and so much understanding as may make the party sensible for what the punishment was inflicted, are always esteemed necessary requisites to render him obnoxious thereto; because punishment operating upon the Imagination, and through that upon the Will, where either of these two channels are wanting, becomes useless, and consequently unjust. Therefore fly Revenges which may be mistaken for accidents, and nobody can know they were the effect of resentment, though sometimes practised by spiteful persons, have never been holden warrantable by the judicious: nor will a righteous man punish where the transgressor had not liberty of choice, nor where the reason of his punishing cannot be understood.

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If a brick tumbles down upon you, it would be ridiculous to fall a whipping, or breaking it, because such discipline could contribute nothing towards preventing other bricks afterwards from tumbling upon your own, or somebody else's head; but had our treatment with brickbats any influence upon their future motions, we should form rules of justice for our dealings with them as well as with one another. When the puppy dog fouls your parlour you beat him for it; but then you rub his nose in the filth to make him sensible why he is beaten; and you think this severity justifiable, without discerning any depravity of heart in the beast, only because it secures your rooms against the like disaster for the future: but if he has stolen a woodcock from the larder, and you do not discover the theft till next morning, when your correction can do no good, it would be cruelty to chastise him.

Mischiefs done by mere accident are judged pardonable: but why? because punishment has no influence upon accidents: for in some cases, where better care may prevent them, we do not scruple to animadvert in order to spur men to greater vigilance: the statute of Ann lays a heavy penalty upon servants setting a house on fire undesignedly; nor did I
ever

ever hear that statute complained of as contrary to natural justice.

Why are military punishments severer than all others? Is there greater depravity in disobedience to an officer, than to a civil magistrate, a parent, or a master? Not so, but because the service requires a stricter discipline, and a more implicit obedience. Nor can you pretend the soldiers consent upon enlisting, for many of them are inveigled to enlist by drink, or by the bounty-money, without knowing what they undertake, or considering the rules they submit to: besides that you subject the impressed man to the same severities with the volunteer.

Why is the law of fashion so strict upon little matters, that a man would make himself more ignominious by wearing his wig the wrong side outwards, than by corresponding with the Pope, or the Pretender? unless because censure, exclamation and ridicule, being the only penalties you have to enforce it, you must lay them on the more lustily to keep the thoughtless world to decency in matters wherein they have none other restraint upon them.

Thus whatever species of punishment we fix our eye upon, we shall always find it deducible from utility; but the deduction is too long to carry constantly in our heads, nor can
every

every head trace it out ; neither do we upon all occasions stand in a situation to discern the consequences of our punishing, or sparing : therefore the judicious, from their observation of those causes, so far as they can investigate them, strike out rules of justice, and distinguish degrees of wickedness, which they hang up in public as marks, or erect as posts of direction to guide our steps in the journey of life ; and inculcate a moral sense, or abhorrence of evil, to serve as a guard to protect us against inordinate desires that might tempt us to injustice, and as a measure to apportion our resentment against the heinousness of an offence, or depravity of an offender.

Such of us as are well disciplined look up to these marks continually, and shape their steps accordingly, both with respect to what they shall avoid themselves, and what notice they shall take of the proceedings and sentiments of their fellow-travellers, without thinking of any thing further ; and much the greater part of us without knowing of any thing further to be thought of : when these latter get a smattering of philosophy, you hear them declaim incessantly upon the essential and unalterable rules of right and wrong, independent on God himself, having a nature he did not give them, and being an obligation

obligation upon him that he must not break through.

36. But the all-seeing eye of God stretches wide and far, beholds all nature and all futurity in one unbounded prospect; therefore needs no marks nor rules to direct his measures, nor moral senses to protect against temptations which cannot approach him: for in every application of second causes, he bears his ultimate end constantly in view, and pursues it unerringly and invariably. What this end may be, perhaps it were in vain for us to enquire, but the utmost point beyond which we can conceive nothing further, is the good and happiness of his creatures: this then we must regard as the centre wherein all his dispensations terminate, and by the tendency whereto he regulates his measures of justice.

Now Punishment must be acknowledged an evil to the sufferer while under the lash of it, therefore unless we will suppose the fountain of Goodness sometimes to terminate his views upon evil, we must allow that he never punishes, unless for some greater benefit to redound therefrom, either to the offender, or some other part of the creation. What other benefits may arise therefrom we know not, but we know its tendency to check or cure a depravity of heart where it is, to discourage the contracting of it where it is not, and consequently

requently to prevent the mischievous fruits growing from that evil root.

Therefore as men are constituted, this remedy is necessary to restrain enormities from abounding among them, unless you will suppose a miraculous interposition, which is not the usual method of providence ; and it is this necessity which justifies the punishment, and ascertains the measure of it. If we go on to enquire further, why men are so constituted, this will involve us in another question, which never was, and perhaps never will be determined by the sons of Adam, namely, why pain, distress, affliction, and uneasiness of all kinds, were permitted at all in the world ; for moral evil were no evil if there were no natural ; because, how could I do wrong, if no hurt or damage could ensue therefrom to any body ? and is no greater than the mischiefs whereof it may be productive. Therefore it is natural evil which creates the difficulty, and the quantity of this evil is the same from whatever causes arising. “ Think
“ ye those eighteen upon whom the tower of
“ Siloam fell were sinners above all other inhabitants of Jerusalem ? ” We are told, nay : yet the pain, the loss of life, and other damages they sustained, were the same in quantity as if they had brought down the ruin upon their own heads for their misconduct.

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Let any man explain to me clearly how the permission of mischievous accidents is consistent with our ideas of infinite goodness, and I will undertake to show him by the lights he shall afford me, how the permission of moral evil is likewise consistent. The only solution of this difficulty I apprehend must be taken from the imperfection of our understanding, for we have observed in a former place, that infinite Goodness and infinite Power considered in the abstract, seem incompatible : which shows there is something wrong in our conceptions, and that we are not competent judges of what belongs, and what is repugnant to goodness. But God knows though we do not, and is good and righteous in all his ways ; therefore whatever method he pursues is an evidence of its rectitude beyond all other evidences that can offer to us for the contrary.

37. Justice regards solely the degree of depravity existent, nor has any concern with the manner how it came to exist : a man bribed with a large sum of money is not excused by the guilt of the employer, although perhaps he would never have thought of committing the crime without that temptation ; and if evil communication corrupts good manners, the corruption coming through this channel does not exempt it from censure. The perpetration indeed of villainies, with-

without any instigation or inducement, aggravates their heinousness, because it indicates a greater depravity of heart ; but the degree of depravity once ascertained, always sets the measure to the detestation and demerit of the offender, without enquiring into the source from whence it was derived ; and we shall find it so in whatever case we consider maturely and candidly.

Suppose you and I delegated by heaven to govern some little district, with absolute power of life and death over the inhabitants, with perfect knowledge of the secrets of their hearts, and were sitting in council together upon the measures of executing our commission, which we were resolved to do with exact justice and integrity. Suppose further, what has been shown not to be the real fact, but in order to make our case the stronger for our present purpose, let us suppose that men had been hitherto utterly destitute of Freewill, but guided in all their motions by an external influence ; and their sentiments and dispositions thrown upon them, without their own act, by the impulse of necessary causes ; but at the moment when we entered upon our office, this influence and impulse were taken off, and they were put into the condition of common men, whom we
have

have conversed with in the world : how should we proceed to manage with them ?

In the first place it may be presumed we should agree upon a general amnesty for the past, in consideration of the force they had lain under ; and in the next we should contrive measures for their future well-being, and finding them in possession of powers of action, together with liberty to use them, we should study to turn their Freewill into courses most advantageous to the community. If we saw vices and malignity among them, we might probably feel an abhorrence and detestation thereof, for I do not suppose ourselves divested of the moral senses we had acquired before ; but this sentiment would be like that aversion we have to spiders, toads and adders, who did not make themselves what they are, but received their venom and ugliness from the hand of nature ; yet I hope we should be too equitable to punish any man merely because we did not like his looks, unless where those looks manifested a badness of heart, productive of mischief to himself or his neighbours, and then we should apply such punishments, notes of infamy, or censures, as we judged most proper for preventing his ill qualities from breaking forth into act, or spreading the contagion elsewhere ; thinking our proceedings justifiable by their

expedience, and regulating the measure of our punishments by their several aptness to answer the purpose intended.

38. If then we find that human reason, when acting most conformably to our ideas of prudence and equity, would restrain depravity, from whatever sources arising, by adequate punishments, why should we arraign the justice of God for proceeding in the like manner? For he beholds the works of his hands, and discerns whereof they are made, nor is he unacquainted with the operations and uses of second causes. He has made moral evil the general, and, as some believe, the sole fountain of natural: He has given man freedom to choose between good and evil: He knows that vices will abound among them, which will influence them to use their freedom to pernicious purposes, and has appointed punishment as one of the springs to operate upon the human mind for restraining the growth of wickedness, and preventing its bad effects. Can we then doubt that he will employ all the springs of action in those uses, and upon those occasions, wherein he in his wisdom judges them respectively proper? or what rule of justice does he violate by so doing?

Why he permitted moral evil, is a consideration quite foreign to the present subject,
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and can only produce that entanglement naturally consequent upon blending discussions of different natures together: for whether we can reconcile that permission with our ideas, or no, still evil being once permitted, becomes a foundation for justice to ward off the bad effects that might ensue from it: for justice cannot stand at variance with goodness, nor can one ever forbid what the other recommends.

As the judge passes sentence upon the house-breaker and the assassin, not in animosity to them, but in regard to the honest man, that he may sleep quietly in his bed, and go about his lawful occasions without hazard of his life: so God punishes the wicked not in wrath and detestation, but in mercy and loving kindness, many times to the delinquent himself, but always either to him or his fellow-creatures.

Therefore to the question, Who hath ever resisted his Will? Why then doth he punish? It may be answered, To secure the further accomplishment of his Will, and to effect his gracious purposes towards those whom he intended to preserve from the like wickedness or the pernicious consequences springing therefrom: views wherein we cannot find the least tincture of injustice or arbitrary proceeding.

39. But it is not enough to justify the ways of God, unless we endeavour likewise to obviate the perverse consequences men sometimes draw from the Will of God being constantly fulfilled. For, say they, if that will always take place, then we have no Will of our own, being pinned down to one particular manner of proceeding, which it is his Will should be taken.

But if human action were necessary, as indeed it is not, we have seen that would not excuse iniquity from punishment, as being an application of the proper cause for preventing the growth and mischiefs of it; and this persuasion sufficiently inculcated, would necessarily, if the operation of motives be necessary, drive them into a course of thinking and acting productive of happiness; and if they attain the possession of this treasure, 'tis not much matter whether they apprehend themselves procuring it by necessary or voluntary agency: therefore they will do well to contemplate the penalties annexed to evil-doing; for it will do them good one way or other, if not as exhortation to work upon a free agent, at least as a salutary medicine to rectify the disorders in their machine.

But an event being agreeable to the Will of another, does not always hinder it from being the choice of our own Will too: what I do
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by the command of a superior, while I pay him a chearful and ready obedience, is done by the Will of both. 'Tis lucky, you say, I stand so disposed, for I must have done the thing had I been ever so desirous of the contrary; so I am in the condition of a man sitting in a room where the doors are locked upon him without his perceiving it; he is actually a prisoner, though he does not feel his confinement, because he happens to chuse the only thing he has in his power, that is, to stay where he is.

But what if I do a good office for an acquaintance to whom I owe no obligation, nor have other inducement than good nature? do not I gratify his Will and my own at the same time? Or what if an artful politician, who can see through and through me, leads me dextrously to co-operate with his designs: although the issue should fall out beside or contrary to my intention, still the steps I am made to take by his management were the work of my own Will. So when God puts in ure the proper causes for producing an event, we need not fear but he will adapt them so wisely as that they shall not fail to accomplish his Will; nevertheless, if among these causes there be the motives fit to work upon a free agent, the act performed is as compleatly the Will of that agent, as if his

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ideas

ideas had derived from any other source, or been thrown up by the fortuitous declination of Epicurus's atoms.

The fallacy here lies in the same equivocation of language taken notice of in the foregoing pages, to which I refer any body who thinks it needful to revise what has been already offered: for the Will of God must be fulfilled in none other sense than what was absolutely foreknown, or contained in the plan of Providence, must come to pass; not by compulsion or necessity, but by removal of all hazard to the contrary.

40. Another fond imagination may start up in men's heads from the never-failing completion of the divine Will, as if it justified them in all the follies they have been guilty of; for, say they, whatever we have done must have been agreeable to the Will of God, because having taken effect; for nothing has fallen out that was not so; therefore wherein have we done amiss? for who hath ever resisted his Will? And they put this question by way of defiance, to give any other than one certain answer.

But they deceive themselves by their manner of wording the question; for had it been asked, who hath defeated his Will? we could not have produced an instance, nor yet would it have served their purpose, nor furnished an
excuse

excuse for their misconduct that we could not: but who hath resisted his Will? is no such unanswerable question; for the Will may be resisted without success, and then come to pass notwithstanding; or it may be misunderstood, and in that case accomplished by the very endeavour to do something contrary to it.

Suppose you lend money to a friend upon his note; he being at a distance, and fully confiding in your honour, sends you a letter with the value inclosed, only desiring you will burn the note, that your executors may not find it to charge him with the debt; but before you can fulfill his request, somebody else finds the note, who having a spite against you, throws it into the fire with intention to disable you from recovering the sum contained in it: here he acts in direct opposition to your Will, his design is nothing else than to cross and thwart you; yet in so doing he does the very thing you will should be done, and would have done yourself, if he had not been beforehand with you. In like manner we may, and too frequently do, resist the Will of God, but by that very resistance accomplish it; for we act in the dark, scarce ever knowing what is his real Will, or that, its constant aim, the good of his creation, with the greatest part whereof we have no visible connection, nor

the least suspicion of what concern their interests have with our proceedings.

We have often heard of a distinction between the secret, and declared Will; the latter is so much as we can discover by the best use of our understanding, which being fallible, will sometimes discover to us what is not the truth; yet this is the guide God has given us for our direction, and while we act conformably thereto, although the event by disappointing our endeavours should prove the secret Will to have been otherwise, nevertheless our honest, though mistaken zeal for his service, will stand approved in his sight, and engage his bountiful favour towards us.

Whereas on the other hand, if we perversely run counter to the admonitions of this guide, it will avail us nothing that our being permitted to take our course proves it agreeable to the secret Will; for God does not punish in anger, nor for having been disappointed of his purpose; a cause of resentment which can never befall him; but with the view of a physician who prescribes a smart operation necessary to cure a distemper that would destroy the patient, or infect the neighbourhood. And if we regard our vicious dispositions in this light, which is the true one, we must behold them with the same aversion we should a loathsome disease, whether we apprehend

apprehend it brought upon us by our own mismanagement, or inflicted by the hand of heaven ; which aversion once become hearty and strong, may be trusted to take its chance for the effect it will have upon our conduct.

41. For it is not so material to give a right judgement upon what is past and cannot be undone, as to take right measures for the future. Therefore lest any should encourage themselves in indolence, or wrong doing, under pretence that since the Will of God is always punctually fulfilled, whatever shall be done, good or bad, must be conformable to that Will, so they need not scruple to take the courses they like, being sure to accomplish it at all events : let them consider, that since that Will shall take effect at all events, they may as well accomplish it by doing right, as wrong, being equally sure either way, that what they shall do will be the thing that was to come to pass : if then the Will of God be done in both cases, and they have their choice in what manner they shall accomplish it, had they not better choose the manner most advantageous to themselves, than one pernicious and destructive to them ?

For our business is to pursue our own truest interests ; we have nothing to do with the secret Will ; that will work itself out without our sollicitude to compleat it : the end assigned

signed us to work out, is none other than our own happiness, to be pursued carefully and industriously, according to the lights afforded us.

Good and evil lie before us; we have powers of action, with liberty to use them: if our powers at any time be limited, we have still some scope to range in; if our passions, or evil habits abridge our liberty, still we may strive and struggle against them: in all cases there is something or other wherein we may exert our endeavours; let us then apply them where they may turn most to our benefit; but above all beware of reducing ourselves to such a deplorable condition, as that even mercy and loving kindness must lay a heavy weight of punishment upon us in order to effect its gracious purposes.

42. There is still another quarter of the wilderness we have not yet explored, where the giant Fate stalks along with irresistible strides, bearing down the forest like tender blades of corn before him, forcing his passage through ramparts and rocks: the textures of human contrivance are but as the dewy cobwebs of autumn across his way; nor can Freewill find a place for the sole of her foot among the heapy ruins wherewith he bestrews the ground.

But

But before we enter into an examination of the courses of Fate, let us, according to our usual custom, endeavour to understand what is properly meant by the word. We find it often confounded with Necessity, or the impulsive operation of necessary causes : so the Stratonian and Democritic Atheists understood it, when they ascribed all events to Fate, that is, to the actions of matter depending upon one another in a continued series from all eternity : and Homer's *Moirai*, strong-handed fate, has been generally translated by the Latin poets, *dura Necessitas*, inflexible Necessity.

But I conceive these two very different things in common understanding, if we may reckon Necessity as here used a common idea, for I rather take necessary agency to be terms belonging to the speculative vocabulary ; but apprehend that operations whereto they may be applicable, cannot upon that account be stiled the Work of Fate, in propriety of language. The circulation of sap in vegetables, the contraction and dilation of their fibres, the action of the sun, air and mould, contributing to make them yield their several fruits, are all necessary agencies : yet when a man plants a peach-tree, can you properly say it is therefore fated that he shall gather peaches and not plumbs or filberds therefrom ? or if
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he sows oats in his field, does he think any thing of a fatality against his reaping wheat or barley? So neither if we knew a collection of atoms having motions among them which must form a regular world, should we esteem every thing fatal that might be produced by them.

But Fate, derived from the Latin, *Fari*, signifying to speak, must denote the word spoken by some intelligent Being, who has power to make his words good; so that whatever he says shall be done, will infallibly come to pass; and does not at all relate to the causes or manner whereby it is accomplished, unless those causes be made to act in consequence of the word spoken.

As to the *Parcæ*, supposed in heathen mythology to spin the thread of life, and by their scissars to determine the period of it, I should understand this thread only to express the series of events befalling every man, not the series of causes operating to bring them forth. And the Pagans seem unsettled in their notions concerning the author of Fate; sometimes it is their Jove who fixes it by his arbitrary decree, as in the ill successes of the Grecian army; sometimes he is only an executive power, subordinate to the *Parcæ*, compelled by their spinning, to do or permit what

what he does not like, as in the death of Sarpidon.

However, leaving them to their own imaginations, with us who acknowledge one supreme Governor subordinate to nothing nor controulable by any other Power, Fate or Destiny, must be the same with the decree of the Almighty ; nor can we doubt that whatever he has decreed will not fail of coming to pass.

43. But this decree works no effect of itself, being no efficient cause ; for if you order your servant to do a thing, the business is done by the efficacy of his action, not of your's ; a command given to a subordinate, we shall acknowledge compulsive ; therefore if any man knows of a decree issued from the Almighty concerning something he is to do, I shall never advise him to strive against it, nor think himself at liberty to do the contrary.

But it is not this kind of decrees that are supposed to generate Fatality, which arises from those unknown to us, confining our actions to the course suited for bringing forth the destined event : yet even in this case it is not the word spoken and never heard by us, but something consequent upon it that imposes the Fatality. We are told indeed, that God said, Let there be Light, and
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there was Light ; yet we cannot imagine the Light sprung forth without some exertion of Omnipotence to produce it ; for when afterwards he said, Let us make man after our own image, nevertheless man was not made until he moulded the dust of the earth into a human body, and breathed thereinto the breath of life : therefore when we say God created all things by his word, we do not understand that they produced themselves out of non-entity, in obedience to the order given, nor that this order was an efficient cause of their existence ; but intend only to express the facility wherewith the divine operations are performed similar to that of a man in authority, causing what he pleases to be done upon the word of command.

Very true, you say : nobody imagines the sound of words spoken can work any thing. But when God pronounces his decree, he accompanies it with some act of power efficacious and irresistible to enforce the execution : or he watches over the tendency of second causes, and turns them by his secret influence to co-operate towards bringing forth the destined event : in both cases he abridges human liberty ; for what is ordained must inevitably come to pass ; nor can all the art or power of man turn it aside ; for the Fatality hanging over us confines our choice to one certain

certain train of objects, or by privately counteracting us, baffles our utmost endeavours, when turned the contrary way.

44. This seems to be the ordinary way of considering this matter, and the concomitant exertion of power makes the difference between a decree and a command, for both are supposed to proceed from the word of God. We are told, he said, Let there be Light, and there was light : we are likewise told, that he said, Thou shalt not murder ; thou shalt not steal ; thou shalt not commit adultery ; nevertheless men do still murder, and steal, and commit adultery, notwithstanding the word spoken. So the word of God operates nothing of itself when delivered as a command, nor unless when delivered as a decree : because in the latter case only, it is accompanied with an exertion of Omnipotence, or a determination to exert it when occasion shall require.

But the idea of a determination, to use power whenever requisite for accomplishing a decree, arises from our narrow conception of the proceedings of God taken from our own manner of proceeding, as observed already in §. 20. and the latter part of §. 29. For when we resolve upon the compassing of any distant purpose, we can scarce ever lay our measures so surely but that they may fail
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of the issue intended; so we are forced to watch over and correct them from time to time as we shall find occasion; or accidents may intervene which will require our further endeavours to prevent their defeating our design: or many times we know not what measures are proper until we have seen the tendency of other causes, and conduct of other persons any ways affecting the end we have in view; and then we must employ such power and skill as we are masters of, in order to bring things into the train we would have them take. From this experience of ourselves, we are led to think the same of the Almighty, whom we conceive as having destined certain particular events, but in general left the powers of nature and free agents to take their own course, until they chance to take a tendency contrary to his designs, and then he controuls and turns them by his secret influence, so as to make them co-operate therewith.

Now a little reflection may show how injurious this notion is to the wisdom and power of God, representing him as fixing indeed upon certain purposes, but uncertain in what manner they shall be brought to pass, until the tendency his second causes shall happen to take, points out the measures necessary for turning them into their destined course; and thus giving chance a share in the government

ment of the world, liable indeed to his controul, but working of herself whenever he does not interfere, and even furnishing employment for his wisdom and power, by the errors she commits.

45. But when we consider, that all events, as well those esteemed fortuitous as others, must proceed from certain causes, which derived their existence and efficacy mediately or immediately from the first; and when we contemplate his Omniscience, extending to every thing that can be supposed the object of knowledge, we shall find reason to convince us that nothing comes to pass unless in consequence of some act of his; and that whenever he acts, he knows precisely what he does, together with the remotest and minutest consequences to result from his doings.

For what bounds shall we set to his intelligence? If our own lies confined within a small compass, it is owing to the scantiness of our organs, those necessary instruments of our perception. We have but two hands, so can touch no more than they will reach to; we have eyes only before us, so can behold no further than half the circle surrounding us: the tablet of our memory, the chart of our imagination, the line of our reflection, have their appointed measures, so we can recollect,

or calculate, or contemplate no more than the ideas they contain.

But God perceives not by organs, neither meditates by animal spirits, or the little fibres of the brain, nor receives his notices by channels, whose number or contents might be computed, so as to determine the precise quantity they are capable of conveying. What then is there to set the limitation to his knowledge; or by what rule or measure can we ascertain the bounds? Can he comprehend a million of ideas, and no more? Does he clearly discover all events to happen within the ensuing century, and no longer? Do the concerns of empires so occupy his thoughts, that he has none to spare for the peasant, the labourer, or the beggar? Are the affairs of men so burthensome to his mind, that he has no room to think of the mouse and the wren, the emmet and the mite, the green myriads of the peopled grass, the many-tribed weeds of the field, or the dancing motes that glitter in the noontide beams?

Since then we know of no boundaries to circumscribe the divine Omniscience, but that it may extend to every thing without overlooking any thing, and discern remotest consequences in their present causes, why should we scruple to admit that he gave being to those causes with a view to their consequences?

quences? and on the formation of a world disposed his substances, material and spiritual, with such properties, powers, situations, motions and ideas, as should produce the exact series of events he intended to bring forth?

In this case there is no occasion nor room for controuling or altering the operation of second causes, they being already adjusted to answer all the purposes they were destined to compleat. And if there be supernatural interpositions (which I neither affirm nor deny) we cannot suppose them made upon unforeseen emergencies to supply defects in the original contrivance; but comprized therein, as being judged proper for manifestation of the divine power and government to intelligent creatures, and worked up into one uniform plan, together with the operations of secondary agents.

46. In this view of the œconomy of Providence, we see that any absolute decree or secret fatality to enforce the execution of a design against the tendency of second causes to turn it aside, must be superfluous, provision being already made in perfect wisdom for every event which is to take effect by disposition of the causes proper to give it birth, nor will any of those causes deviate into another tendency than that they were calculated to take.

Thus it appears, that all things fall out according to the Will and disposition of God, and conformably to the scheme of his Providence, working for the most part, if not always by the ministry of material or voluntary agents : but the methods whereby this ministry is conducted are various. Some parts of the plan are accomplished by the choice and industry of man, instigated thereto by appetites, judgements, imaginations, desires, obligations, dangers, and other motives ; other parts are executed by the stated laws of nature, such as the instinct of brutes, action of the elements, powers of vegetation, qualities of soils, changes of seasons, and vicissitudes of night and day ; and others brought about by the courses of fortune dependent upon the situations of substances, and their mutual applications upon one another, to us accidental and uninvestigable.

But what proceeds from the two first of these causes, we do not usually ascribe to the hand of Fate : for nobody looks upon it as a Fatality that last winter is now succeeded by summer ; that the days are long, the air warm, the corn and fruits begin to ripen, for all these are natural, nor could any body expect things should have fallen out otherwise. So neither do we think a parent fated to put his son out to school, for it was his desire to
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give him a good education, and his choice and judgement directed him to the proper methods for effecting it.

Therefore the last class of causes only remains for the province of Fate, to wit, such whose operations are fortuitous and unaccountable, that is, beyond the reach of human foresight and sagacity to discover; nevertheless they must have some certain springs and issues, as well as the motions of nature or actions of men.

47. Thus the same events lie under the disposal of Fate and of Fortune, and both terms take their rise from our manner of conceiving things. Chance is no agent nor power, but the creature only of imagination, deriving its birth from our ignorance; for when we see causes at work, but know not their tendency, we say it is a chance what they will produce: therefore that which is chance to one man may be none to another, who has better information or more judgement to discern the train things are taking.

If a die were to be thrown, the cast would be produced by the motions of the thrower's arm, the shape of the box, inequalities of the table, and other imperceptible circumstances, of which we can make no estimate, therefore we deem it to lie under the power of Chance; but were the cast to determine between two

malefactors which of them should suffer, we should then think it a matter worthy referring to the supreme disposer of all events, for the lot cometh from the Lord; yet still being uncertain what means he will employ, or what effect they shall take, we attribute the decision to his Will or Decree, skipping over that undiscernible chain of causes lying between his first appointment and those now in act.

Therefore Fate and Fortune seem for the most part to claim a concurrent jurisdiction, many tracts lying within the province of both: and under this apprehension we express ourselves upon common occasions; for when we hear of a man falling in battle, we say indifferently, it was his Fate, or his Fortune to be slain; and of a young person intended to be sent abroad, but uncertain in what business, or what place he may find opportunities for settling, we say, it is doubtful where his lot may fall, where fortune may carry him, or his fate or destiny fix him.

But to which of these powers we shall ascribe the influence, depends upon the objects we take into contemplation: while we regard only the secret springs and unforeseen incidents which may affect an event, we deem it in the hand of Fortune: but when we look
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on further to that intelligent Being, who is the disposer of all events, we conceive that those springs will work, and incidents fall out, according to his direction and decree.

Nevertheless it is obvious, as we observed before, that a decree will work nothing without an application of power to enforce the execution of it; and when such application has been made by provision of the proper means for bringing an event to pass, a decree or declaration of the purpose intended becomes needless: for the requisite measures being once taken, will have their effect, whether any word be spoken concerning them or no. Therefore the issues of things proceed, and fortune derives her efficacy, from the provision not the decree of the Almighty, from the work of his hand, not the word of his mouth; and this latter, if any such there were, added nothing to the acts of Omnipotence, but must be delivered for some other purpose than to ensure the completion of his design.

48. Hence it appears, that in using the terms Fate, Decree or Destiny, we speak after the manner of men; for it being customary with us, whenever we resolve upon some distant work, to declare our intentions to persons under our influence, who may assist in completing it, and to fix a determination in our minds which may render us vigorous, and

keep us watchful in the prosecution, we conceive of God as making the like declared or mental determination with regard to every spot he comprises within the plan of his Providence.

Then again, being sensible this determination cannot operate upon the courses of fortune as a command, yet that something must operate to put them in motion; and being unable to trace, or even to conceive a chain of causes extending from the first formation of the plan to all those multifarious events, which we cannot help acknowledging must come to pass by the divine appointment; we get an obscure idea of an irresistible force, a something we cannot explain nor account for its existence, which we call a Fatality, which perpetually hangs over second causes, constraining their motions, or like an adamant wall, confining them within their appointed course, from whence they would have a natural propensity to deviate. Thus Fatality becomes disjoined from the decree, and loses the proper import belonging to it by its derivation, being now no longer a *fatum* or word spoken, but one knows not well what; an emanation from it, like light from the sun-beams, a power without an agent to exert it; for when God has spoken, his action
ceases

ceases, and the Fatality is a consequence of what he has said.

That this is the sence, if a sence it may be called, that men ordinarily affix to the term, appears by the Atheists employing it, who acknowledge no intelligent Being who might fari, that is, speak or issue a decree: for being called upon to assign a cause for the laws and establishments of nature, they ascribed them to a blind Fatality, working upon the mass of matter throughout the universe, and driving it into a regular form. But if we regard etymology, a blind fatality is as absurd an expression as that of a dumb decree, or an unintended design. The Epicureans alone discarded Fate upon a most unphilosophical principle, that events may ensue, such as the declination of atoms, without any prior cause whatever to produce them: but all who admitted an eternal First Cause, whether intelligent or unsentient, seem to have entertained a notion of Fatality.

This confused and indeterminate notion opened the door to judicial Astrology, for though the stars were supposed by their positions to affect the lives of men, I never yet heard it attempted to be shown in what manner, or by what mediums they operated: but a conformity being once fancied between the successes of human transactions and aspects

pects of the heavenly bodies, it was a short way to talk of a Fatality, though nobody could tell why, or how, or by what channels the connection should be effected.

The like may be said of the *Parcæ*, whose singing answers to the decree uttered, and could have none other effect than to amuse themselves and lighten their task; but it was the thread they spun which determined the duration and colour of men's lives beyond the power of Jove himself to alter: yet we never hear of their having any communication with sublunary affairs or acting as efficient causes upon any thing moving here; nevertheless upon their spinning, there instantly arose a sympathetic energy in the causes at work upon earth, drawing them to produce an issue conformable to what was spun.

49. We see from the foregoing observations, how the term Fate has slidden off its original basis, being departed from its first signification, that of a decree or resolve of the Almighty to a something generated thereby, an undefinable influence, residing neither in body, nor soul, nor substance, but an abstract force or activity, hovering as it were in the air, and operating upon the causes of things as they severally begin to act.

Nor yet do men keep always steady to this idea of Fate in their common conversation; for

for we often hear them talk of the Fate of a convict criminal lying in the hand of the Prince who has power to pardon or to order execution; the lover waits for the decision of his mistress to fix his Fate; the poet talks of physicians issuing mandates in arrest of Fate, and an unexpected accident or arrival of a timely succour is thought sometimes to change the Fate of a battle: whereas if we regard the genuine notion of Fate, it was fixed long ago by the decree of heaven; nor is it in the power of man, nor any natural agent, to determine, or stop, or change, or affect it in any respect.

These variations of language do not disturb us in our ordinary discourses, for the context or occasion introducing them moulds our words into the shape that is proper; but men of thought and abstraction, desirous of affixing constantly the same ideas to their words, find themselves disappointed when they light upon a term of vague and unstable signification: for as we generally think in words, and their sense in the various phrases whereto we join them, is determined by custom; we are led insensibly in the progress of our reasonings to understand them differently, from whence great confusion and perplexity must unavoidably ensue.

Therefore

Therefore the science of language, and exact observation of ideas adhering thereto, would help us greatly in our discoveries of nature; for if men could fix upon terms not liable to variation of sense or misapprehension, their disputes would be shortened, and they might quickly arrive at so much knowledge as is attainable by human understanding. We have found no reason hitherto to disregard the admonitions of our present patroness Philology, they having been helpful to us upon several occasions; and she informs us, the word Fate carries a very loose and indeterminate signification.

For this reason I wish it were quite expunged from the philosophical vocabulary, and Providence substituted in its room, which I conceive would render our thoughts clearer and less intricate, and give them a freer progress when turned upon the government of the world; for the provisions of heaven in the original disposition of adequate causes may answer all purposes, as well those accomplished by natural as accidental means, or the motions of free agency.

50. But men find a difficulty in conceiving of absolute dominion, without a coercive authority or compulsion exercised upon the subjects under it: which makes us all so fond of power as a necessary means of bringing our purposes

purposes to bear against the opposition of other agents which might attempt to defeat them. Yet in many instances, as has been remarked in §. 19. we ourselves can make provision for designs wherein other persons are to concur, and guide their conduct so far as we know what will move them, and have the proper motives in our hands, without pretending to any authority or compulsive power over them. And if there be always some hazard of a disappointment, it is because we can never see thoroughly the exact state of their desires, nor what external accidents, such as weather, disease, or the like, may disturb the success of our schemes: but were there nothing extraneous to interfere, and had we a perfect knowledge of men's minds, much more, were their inclinations and judgements of our framing, we should need no despotic jurisdiction nor controuling power to guide them into what courses of behaviour we pleased.

Now there is nothing external to the work of God. The laws of nature bringing forth her various productions were of his establishment: the workings of chance followed from some determinate causes, though to us unknown; these again from other prior, and so on in a continual channel from the sources first opened by the exertion of his power; for no event, however casual, can happen without

out something occasioning it to fall out in that manner: the actions of men proceed according to their apprehensions and judgments thrown upon them by their constitution or temperament, by education, by company and occurrences befalling them in life; all which were conveyed by nature or fortune, and therefore must be referred to the origin from whence they derived. For every effect must be produced by the action of some agent material or spiritual, or the concurrence of several, and must follow according to the manner of that action being exerted; which manner was determined by some impulse or motive impressed from elsewhere; nor can we stop until we arrive at some act of Omnipotence.

Thus the face of things, as well in the moral as natural kingdoms, results from the qualities, positions, and motions God gave to his substances at the formation of a world. It remains only, that we ask ourselves the question, whether he extended his plan to a compass larger, than he could comprehend himself, or gave birth to causes which might produce events unthought of by him, or more numerous than he could grasp in his Omniscience? If we answer in the negative, we must needs acknowledge that provision was made at the beginning for all that train of events,

events, and accomplishment of those purposes we have seen, or shall hereafter see effected.

But experience testifies, that this provision leaves many things in our power, and circumscribes us in many other respects ; we lay schemes, and take measures appearing certain to succeed, but find them fail in the issue, and that by accidents we could not have expected, nor can account for their happening ; our reason deserts us in time of need ; we commit blunders, and give into follies we could not have thought ourselves capable of : tempests, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and destructive diseases arise from no natural causes that we can discern ; and our experience of those things give us the notion of Fatality. Therefore Fate, if we will needs employ the term in our speculations, is that part of the divine provision producing events which would not have ensued by the known laws of nature, nor operation of observable causes, nor contrivances of man, but are rather contrary to his endeavours.

51. Seneca, in Nat. Quæst. Lib. II. cap. 36. defines Fate the necessity of all things and actions, which no force can break through : and he seems herein to have given Fate the import belonging to it in common propriety of language ; for the courses of
Fate

Fate are always deemed irresistible and unalterable ; nor do we apply the term unless to cases wherein the Will and power of man has no concern.

Therefore when a person fails in a distemper, we say it was his Fate to die, because we suppose his wish and endeavours were bent upon preventing it : but if he escapes, we do not say he was fated to recover, but at most that his Fate was not yet come, that is, has not yet operated upon him ; for this was the effect of the cares taken to save him.

If we happen to ruin a scheme we were extremely fond of accomplishing through some palpable misconduct of our own, we think ourselves under a fatal infatuation, because every body is conceived willing to employ his best judgement for his own benefit ; from whence comes the observation, that whom Jove would destroy, he first deprives of their understanding : but if we chance to succeed beyond expectation by a more than ordinary dexterity of management, we think nothing of Fatality, because the unusual clearness of judgement and success consequent thereupon, were things agreeable to our wish, and effects of bestirring ourselves in the exercise of our faculties.

So

So likewise a fatal accident is that which brings on an event, we are extremely averse to: whereas a lucky incident is never termed fatal, because tending to further our advancement towards something we desire.

But if Seneca was right in calling Fate a Necessity, which no force can break through, we cannot think him so in the extent he has given to its dominion, comprehending all things and all actions: for this swallows up the whole province of Freewill, to which Fate and Necessity, in every body's understanding, are counted diametrically opposite: for what is fated to happen does not lie in my power to prevent, and what depends upon my pleasure and option, is yet undetermined by any Fatality.

Nor let it be thought we injure him, by taking his expression too strictly; for he goes on, in cap. 38. to particularize in matters belonging directly to human management. If, says he, it be fated that such a young person shall become eloquent, it is likewise fated that he shall study rhetoric; if that he shall grow rich, it is fated that he shall trade to foreign parts. In like manner his brother Stoic, Chrysippus, insists, in Tully de Fato, cap. 13. that when a sick man is fated to recover, it is confated that he shall send for a physician; to which it might be

added, and that the doctor shall use his best skill, and the apothecary dispense his recipes properly.

But any common eye may see, that these Fates do not carry such a necessity as the force of man cannot break through : for the scholar, if he pleases, may neglect his studies, the young trader squander away his stock in extravagancies and debaucheries, the sick person persist obstinately in refusing help, the doctor destroy his patient, or the apothecary impose upon both by neglecting to provide good drugs, or mixing up ingredients that will do mischief.

What then ! are not eloquence, riches, and health, the blessings of heaven ? are they not given to those whom God thinks proper, and withholden from whom he pleases ? Or can any, to whom he designs a favour, ever fail of receiving the effects of his bounty ? By no means ; nor does this consequence follow from our rejection of Fatality : for tho' all things are not fated, yet all things are wisely provided, so as to take the train requisite for compleating whatever events were contained within his plan. Thus the orator and merchant were provided by education, example, and other natural means, with a disposition for improving the talents and opportunities put into their hands ; the sick man

is

is provided with sense to know the value of life, and fondness for its preservation; the medical assistants with compassion to a fellow-creature in distress, with skill and diligence and a desire to maintain their credit in their professions: and these dispositions will infallibly put them upon taking those measures voluntarily, which they had full power and free liberty to have omitted.

Thus the Will of God is done without employing the compulsive force of Fate, or rigid arm of Necessity. But the difficulties that have always perplexed the speculative upon this subject, spring from their not observing the double sense of the word possible, as it relates to power or to contingency, remarked in the foregoing pages, §. 30, 31; for want of which they could not conceive how any thing could be left to the power and option of man, without inferring a possibility that he might defeat the purposes of God. But having well settled that distinction in our minds, and taking along with us that the behaviour of men follows upon their apprehensions and sentiments which result from the seen and unseen springs employed by God in his administration of the moral world, we may easily comprehend how it may be possible, that is, in the power of man, in many instances to frustrate his designs; nevertheless

he may so perfectly know what will be the desires and thoughts of their hearts, that there is no possibility, that is, no danger, they should pursue any other than the particular tenour of conduct most conducive thereto.

52. The essence of Fate lying in its unchangeableness and independence on the turns of Freewill, the powers of different persons being various, and coming or going according as opportunity changes, there is no paradox in asserting, that the same event may be under the arbitrary disposal of one man, which is fated and necessary to another, and may be matter of choice to-day, which was esteemed the work of Fate yesterday, and may be so again to-morrow.

Suppose you and I could give evidence against somebody of a capital offence unknown to any body else; but there being some favourable circumstances in his case, we went into a room together to consult whether we should make the discovery or no: this we should be apt to call fitting to fix his Fate; and any body upon seeing us come out, and knowing what we had been about, might properly ask, well, what is his Fate? is he doomed to die? But though our decision be reckoned Fate, with respect to the culprit, as being unalterable and inevitable
by

by him, yet we should not esteem ourselves under a Fatality or Necessity to prosecute, because it would still remain in our power to do it or forbear.

Marriages are commonly said to be made in heaven ; yet it is of the very essence of marriage to have the free consent of the parties ; for the solemnization follows upon their Will and desire ; but the causes influencing their choice were not of their own procurement, but extraneous and fortuitous to them. A man determined to settle in the world, but unprovided of his object, may think it in the hand of Fate or Fortune what qualified party he shall meet with ; but when the acquaintance is made, the liking fixed, and matters agreed on both sides, things proceed thence forward under the direction of Choice and Freewill ; then again, if afterwards she prove a shrew, he may chance to curse his stars for subjecting him to so cruel a Fate.

The fall of Troy was said to be written in the book of Fate before its foundation ; yet the parties instrumental thereto, Paris and Helen, the Grecian Princes, the council of Priam refusing restitution, acted by passion, contrivance, design, and deliberation, those springs of free agency : and during the siege, the poor Trojans used their utmost efforts to

ward off the stroke of Fate, which nevertheless fell inevitably upon them.

Thus when Fate has begun his course, it opens at intervals to let in Freewill, who having played her part, the stream closes again, and involves all before it in irresistible necessity.

From hence it appears, that in disquisitions upon this subject our business is to enquire not so much into the nature of things, as the import of expressions and state of ideas under contemplation; and we shall often find that the same event, according to the persons concerned in it, to the light wherein we place it, or to our considering the whole or some part only of the chain whereon it hangs, shall be either the work of Fate, the effect of Chance, or the product of human Industry, Forethought and Option. For Fate and Necessity being always opposed to free Choice, may be applicable to an Event or not, according to whose choice, or what act of the Will you refer it.

If I lie under the power of a superiour in what manner to dispose of me, the determination is Fate to me, tho' matter of choice and deliberation to him. So I may esteem it in the hand of Fate to determine how I shall dispose of myself seven years hence, if I cannot by any present act of mine certainly direct

direct my future resolves ; but when the time of action comes, I shall then have it in my power and option which way to turn myself : then again, after I have executed my choice and fixed my situation, if I run back through the whole chain of causes bringing me there-into, the opportunities enabling, and inducements prevailing on me to take the part I did, which were not of my own procurement, I may be apt to call it the work of Fate.

No wonder then that so variable and slippery a term should often present us with double lights, bewildering the most cautious traveller, like an ignis fatuus : wherefore, as I said before, it were better we could do entirely without it ; for Providence seems a much clearer and steadier idea ; nor are there the like difficulties in understanding how this, by the apt disposition of causes suited to each respective purpose, may generate the laws of nature, shape the windings of fortune, and produce the motives giving the turn to human volition.

53. Let us now consider how far our conduct and condition in life may be cramped and controuled by this universal provision. We find ourselves circumscribed in our powers, our knowledge, and the scope allotted us to exercise them. This nobody doubts. The severities of winter succeed the conveniencies of summer ; our weight binds us down to the
S 4 earth,

earth, nor can we soar aloft like the swallow. Tempests, diseases, and sinister accidents come upon us inevitably, and many things fall out beyond our skill or power to prevent them : but want of skill and power is not want of liberty. Bars, obstructions, and restraints confine us in the exercise of those powers we have ; but there is a difference between freedom of action and freedom of Will : the latter respects only such things as we have a natural ability to perform, and against which there lies no impediment to prevent the success of our endeavours. But Freewill cannot proceed without inducements to move, and ideas to direct it ; therefore that provision which supplies us with these, is so far from overthrowing, that it is the basis and support of our freedom.

Nor would doubts arise concerning our possession of this privilege, if we did not generally extend it beyond its proper object, which, strictly speaking, is none other than the present action in our power ; but our present endeavours often have a tendency to distant purposes ; and experience teaches us what they have been used to produce ; therefore we esteem the consequences to be effected by them as under our power, and subjects of our option : then, if such remote events fall out otherwise than expected, we ascribe it to a Fatality ;
whereas

whereas the failure was really owing to particular circumstances we did not attend to, or the interfering of natural causes we did not take into account.

More especially we conceive ourselves masters of our own ideas, and to have the constant use of that judgement and discretion we possess ; therefore if they fail us at any time in some egregious misconduct, we apprehend ourselves as having been under a secret infatuation ; because the proceeding being contrary to our present and former Will and judgement, which we can scarce believe could have varied so greatly in the interval, we conclude a force must have been put upon our Will to make it act so opposite to its own designs.

But it is well known, that our apprehensions are not always the same, nor does reason always operate with equal vigour ; imagination varies her scenes, discretion falls off her guard, fancies start up, desires intrude, passions beguile, and things present themselves in unusual aspects, owing to the state of our bodily humours, the mechanical play of our organization, prevalency of our habits, and appearance of external objects ; all which are natural causes acting with a regularity undiscernible to ourselves. So there is no occasion for recurring to that unsubstantial Fatality
spoken

spoken of in § 48. for Fate is so much of the order of second causes, as our Will has no share in carrying on, and our Understanding no light to discover.

Thus Fate and Freewill have their distinct provinces, nor ever appear to clash unless when we happen to mistake the boundaries; but if we esteem events within our power which depend upon other causes, we may find ourselves frustrated, not by a force upon our Will, but by having undertaken more, and carried our expectations further than we were warranted. For the giant Fate, though enormous in strength and stature, never tramples upon Liberty, nor so covers the ground as not to leave some space for human Agency while employed in its proper offices.

54. For we have nothing to do with Events lying within the bosom of Fate, nor are we to take our measures upon any thing we may fancy contained there: it may affect the success, but cannot alter the prudence of our conduct, which consists in the conformity of our actions with the best lights of our judgement.

If God has any secret purpose to accomplish, no doubt he has provided causes to work it out; our business lies only with those causes whose existence and tendency we can discern ;

discern; while we make the due use of them, so far as we have power and opportunity, we shall perform our little share in the execution of his plan.

When we have determined upon our point ever so wisely, and projected our scheme ever so prudently, perhaps there may be a decree to a contrary effect which will baffle all our endeavours: but this can be no guide to us, nor object of our contemplation, until manifesting itself by the completion: in the mean time, if we find things take a wrong turn unexpectedly, we are not from thence to infer there is a Fatality upon them, for we cannot expect to penetrate into the secret workings of Fate, which are purposely concealed from us, but must employ our skill and industry to rectify our measures, while there remains any probability of success, that is, until we perceive invincible obstacles standing apparently in the way.

Nor have we the less range of action for the secret springs of events taking their certain course by the divine appointment, neither would our liberty be at all enlarged, if they were set in motion by the fortuitous declination of Epicurus's atoms. Experience teaches that our strongest expectations are liable to be frustrated, and our best projected schemes rendered abortive unaccountably; and we should
stand

stand equally at a loss how to ward off the disappointment whether it were to come by chance or by Fate, for we can as little conjecture what the wild workings of chance would produce, as the stated provisions of wisdom : in both cases we can only proceed according to what we see, and put in use those methods which we judge most expedient. Nor would it prove less destructive of care and industry, if we should entertain a notion of luck running against us, than of a Fatality.

55. There is one species of Fate respecting the condition of each man in another life dependent on his conduct in this, commonly called Predestination. This, in many people's apprehension, carries with it the idea of a Fatality ; for they say the Saint cannot sin, nor the Sinner do right : yet it being obvious there can be neither right nor wrong, unless in things within our power and option, they suppose that though we have power to perform, we have none to choose ; so there lies a force upon the Will constraining it to one particular choice.

But experience does not support this doctrine, for the wicked now and then use their power well, and it is too notorious that the righteous often fail of doing the good they might. Did Peter act right when he thrice
denied

denied his master? Or did Pilate act wrong in using endeavours to get Jesus released instead of Barabbas? and does not this manifest, that neither were under a constant fatality, but left sometimes at least at liberty to depart from their general tenour of conduct?

Then if any pretend that this general tenour, so far as requisite to denominate the party good or bad, is influenced by the fatality of a decree; let them search into the recesses of the human heart, examine the judgements, desires, imaginations harbouring there, understand perfectly all the natural causes anywise affecting them, and clearly discern that none of these are adequate to the effect, before they are warranted to assert this. Nor let them build too hastily upon the dictates of authority, which are best explained by experience of facts, and are delivered in a language accommodated to the common conceptions of men, wherein we often ascribe events to the act of God, which were the result of second causes established by him.

Therefore it may be true that God giveth us both to will and to do, without constraining our Wills by his immediate and irresistible influence; as it is true, that he giveth us our daily bread, though he sends it not by special messengers, as he did to Elias, but by the provisions he made for the fruits of nature in the
structure

structure of plants, fertility of soils, kindly warmth of the sun, seasonable refreshments of dews and showers, and by the provisions he made for exerting human industry, and fixing an attachment to their several professions in the farmer, the miller, the mealman, and the baker.

56. It must be acknowledged that the final state of every man, as well as all other events without exception, depends upon causes flowing from springs originally provided by the Almighty; and in this light it may be said that none shall be saved whose names were not written in the book of life: but the writing in this book, if we will employ the figure, has no efficacy, nor can limit our freedom, being no more than a declaration or record of the causes in act, and operations of under-causes flowing from them; which are equally matter of record, whether running in the channel of freewill, or of impulse, force, and necessity.

And the provisions now spoken of encroach least of any upon the province of free Agency; a man may have his bones broken, his fortune ruined, his life destroyed, by earthquakes, tempests, plagues, or other accidents he cannot possibly guard against nor prevent; but his interests in futurity cannot be hurt, unless by some action he has power and liberty to forbear.

forbear. Therefore is he free in whatever he does affecting those interests, notwithstanding the entry recorded, or provision preordained; for liberty, as we have seen before, depends upon the act ensuing the exertion of our power, not upon any thing antecedent, nor upon the motives or causes inciting us to exert it: if we have talents, opportunities, understanding and discretion, we have the same freedom to use them by what means soever they came to us, whether by a sudden and accidental good fortune, or by a long series of causes pre-appointed for that purpose.

But men are led by their averfeness to trouble to extend the idea of their power beyond its proper bounds; they want to do something to-day whereby to ensure an indefeasible title to future happiness, without leaving any thing for to-morrow, but to take their pastime in the manner most agreeable to themselves. This is mistaking their province, for they can never do their work so compleatly but there will always remain something further to do: yet this does not affect their liberty to take such measures as at present are feasible; for whatever be predestined concerning them to-morrow, they may still do so much for themselves as the actions now in their power amount to.

Therefore

Therefore it behoves us to stand always upon the watch, to observe every succeeding moment what comes into our power, and to employ it so as may turn most for our benefit: for Predestination rightly understood, operates by our hands, and the course we steer is always that it takes upon every particular occasion, unless when it employs external causes not under our controul, and these we have no business with: where indeed we could know the success depends solely upon such causes, our cares and endeavours were superfluous, but in matters depending upon ourselves, our opinion or disbelief of their being predestined in the manner above described by a provision of the proper causes for enabling, moving and directing us, how to bestir ourselves, makes no alteration in the rule of our conduct. For if a merchant breeds up his son to industry, instructs him in the mysteries of trade, and furnishes him a competent stock, with a certain foreknowledge and determination that he shall make a fortune thereby: nevertheless the same diligence, the same circumspection, and the same methods of proceeding will be requisite as if those advantages had fallen upon him accidentally, and the success been absolutely unknown to every body.

57. But it is not enough to take off the discouragements against deliberation and activity, unless we quiet the apprehensions arising in men's minds concerning their future proceedings: for some disturb themselves with the dread of a predetermination upon all their motions, which may turn them hereafter into the road of destruction, notwithstanding the best dispositions they find at present in their hearts. But let them consider, that their present actions were as much predestined as any they shall perform hereafter, yet they find themselves at full liberty to shape them in such manner as they judge expedient; therefore they may depend upon having the like freedom at other times.

Well, but they know not what ideas may then start up in their minds urging them to misapply their powers. Is there not the like hazard attending the common affairs of life? for other events, as well as those affecting the moral character, are equally predestined by the provision of causes suited to bring them forth. Yet who that lives in peace and plenty ever affrights himself with the thought that there may be secret springs at work which may deprive him of his health, his limbs, or his substance? While things go on in a good train, and no danger discernible to human circumspection threatens, we rest contented

with our situation, unmolested by imaginary terrors; and so we may with respect to our spiritual concerns, for virtue improves itself, and good habits grow stronger by exercise: therefore though our final state remains in the hand of Providence, and we cannot penetrate the secret councils of heaven, yet the right dispositions we feel at present, are an evidence that provision is made for a happy issue at last, an evidence sufficient to exclude every thing more than a possibility of our failing: nor were it expedient that this should be excluded, as being serviceable to keep us vigilant, and guard us against a supineness of temper that might creep upon us insensibly.

Besides, let us examine wherein it would better our condition, if God were to revoke his Predestination, and undo his provision of causes, so far as relates to ourselves: would this enable us by our present cares so to bind our future conduct as that it could never run amiss? and if not, how would matters be mended with us? There would still remain a possibility that after having begun well we might faint in the midway, and this event would become absolutely fortuitous: but we should hardly find more comfort in thinking that our Fate depended upon the cast of a die than upon a Predetermination.

So

So then it might fairly be put to men's choice whether they had rather believe themselves in the hand of Chance, or of a wise and gracious Governour: for the proceedings of wisdom are regular, and tho' we know not perfectly what belongs to goodness, we may form a judgement thereon satisfactory to any reasonable person; but the flighty gambols of chance are objects of no science, nor grounds of any dependence whatever.

Nor should we find greater security in the privilege of indifference so much vaunted by some, for this being controulable by no motives, it would avail us little to have a sober understanding and virtuous inclinations moving us to take a salutary course; for our Free-will of indifference might run counter to them all, nor could we have any assurance what turns it might take: which must throw us again into all the anxieties attendant upon the dominion of chance.

Thus whatever hypothesis we can frame, leaves as much room for apprehensions as that of Predestination above described; for while we conceive it operating not by a Fatality, but by an apt disposition of second causes, it gives as large a scope to human freedom and forecast, and industry, as we have reason from experience to think ourselves possessed of; and as good ground of expectation from the

success of our measures as we are warranted in any light to entertain.

58. Nevertheless, if the mind appears to have taken a wrong turn, are there not just grounds of apprehension? Most assuredly. But this turn manifests itself most evidently in the prevalence of evil habits, and attachment to present pleasures, without regard to the consequences; therefore those who stand in greatest danger, are least apt to take the alarm, and whoever could raise it in them, would do them an inestimable kindness. On the contrary, such in whom disquietudes abound, have upon that very account the less reason to entertain them; for an earnest concern for the future being the first and principal spring provided for bringing men into the right way, where this appears strongly, it is of itself alone an evidence that provision has been made in their favour.

But despondencies of this kind are often owing to the indiscretion of teachers, who insist too strenuously upon higher perfections of virtue than human nature can attain, and are found to prevail most upon women, or persons of small ability, and in their contemplative hours rather than seasons of action. For the consolation of such persons therefore let it be observed, that righteousness does not consist in the quantity of good we do, but in
our

our doing so much, be it little, or be it much, as lies in our power. There are pegs and pins in a building as well as beams and columns, nor can we doubt that God distributes to every man the talents suited to the task he is to perform; therefore if we attend only to family affairs, or making broths for the sick, provided this be all we had ability to do, we have compleated our part.

Let it next be remarked, that our imagination does not lie under our absolute command to raise ideas there, in what strength and vividness of colour we please: the Poet cannot always fill himself with inspiration, nor the Philosopher with his clear discernment of abstracted truth, nor the religious man with his ardors and transports: therefore the want of a fervent faith and glowing zeal is not so much the mark of reprobation, as of a present indisposition of the organs.

Let it further be remembered, that notwithstanding what may have been inculcated of a constant attention to the duties of religion, our business lies chiefly in action, and the common duties of life: so that when perplexities overcloud us, instead of foreboding melancholy omens from the gloom they cast, we should rather take them as admonitions, that it is not now the season to puzzle our brains with thinking; but to bestir ourselves in

some active employment, or pursue some innocent recreation, which may supply us with a flow of spirits for reason to work with to better purpose afterwards.

For if fear and trembling be a duty, a becoming confidence and just repose in the divine Goodness is a duty likewise; nor is fortitude less a virtue than prudence, and the proper province of both is ascertained by their usefulness. Therefore when anxieties arise, it behoves us to consider what purpose they may answer; while they serve to keep us vigilant, and spur on our activity in helping ourselves, we do well to encourage them; but when they tend to no good, nor urge us to any thing we should not have done as well without them, we cannot do better than to turn our face from them, and use any expedient at hand to banish them out of our thoughts.

But Predestination, though formerly making much noise in the world, is now grown an unfashionable topic, nor am I sorry that it is so; for though I think it might be so explained as to render it neither formidable nor subversive of diligence, yet I fear such explanation would not take effect with common apprehensions, but they would still annex to it an idea of Fatality; which must unavoidably nourish despondencies in phlegmatic tempers,

pers, presumption, and fatal security in the sanguine.

59. I have now rummaged every corner of the wilderness, and left no thicket untried that I could think of: it has been my endeavour to open the passages as I went along, and disentangle the boughs where they had matted themselves together, or been interlaced by persons of an unlucky shrewdness in perplexing; so that the traveller may never be driven against the thorns without finding an opening to escape them, nor bewildered in mazes, without feeling a clue to direct him.

Yet I do not pretend so to have cleared the way, as that he may run carelessly along; for the boughs will still overhang, the paths remain dark, rugged, and intricate, and the clue put into his hands be apt to slip away from him: therefore he must not proceed in a hurry, but take every step warily and circumspectly, putting the twigs aside that they may not strike against his eyes, nor intercept his view of the ground as he goes along, and keeping good hold of his several clues while necessary for his guidance.

If I have not done my work compleatly to the satisfaction of every body, allowance may be made for the difficulty of the subject; which has foiled so many men of deep

thought and learning, that should any thing be found here to render it clearer, I should rather look upon it as a lucky hit, than any claim to extraordinary merit. For I have not pretended to manage the same train of argument better than other people, but have proceeded in a method of my own, which if pursued imperfectly, may still serve as a hint, that others may improve upon to greater advantage. I have at least to my own content effected a perfect reconciliation between Freewill and Universal Providence, and if this could be done to the general content, it would be no small service to the serious part of mankind; for neither of these points can easily be given up, nor has it hitherto been found easy to show them consistent with one another.

For our reason affords us so many grounds of assurance, that affairs as well in the moral as natural world, are administered by the power and wisdom of God; and yet so many important events, such as the rise and fall of empires, the lives and deaths, the fortunes and distresses of men, depend upon their behaviour among one another, that we cannot but be persuaded he governs the thoughts and actions of mankind with as full and absolute a dominion as he does the courses of nature. On the other hand, daily experience bears witness that

that our motions lie under our own controul, and we can do this thing or that as we please, without any force constraining, or dominion compelling us to the contrary. Then upon comparing these two considerations together, while they appear to clash, we are tempted to distrust either our reason or our experience; and according to which part we take, either are thrown off our discretion and tenour of conduct by the imagination of a secret influence and compulsion hanging over us, or lose our dependence upon Providence, that truest solace of our minds in time of danger and distress, and surest direction of our conduct in seasons of ease and prosperity.

Whereas were the inconsistency taken off, we might then allow both human agency and divine government their full extent, because they might co-operate in the same work without interfering with each other: we should see no discouragement against making observations upon the things about us relative to our conduct, and taking our measures accordingly with freedom, and a decent confidence in their success; and we should depend contentedly upon the guidance of Providence for turning the courses of fortune and actions of persons with whom we have any concern, so as to procure all the good intended to be bestowed upon us.

Nay

Nay further, when we consider that things visible and invisible, lie under the dominion of one governour, connecting all in one wisely regulated polity, wherein nothing is established in vain, and reflect how much of our time is lost in sleep and infancy, how many pains, diseases and troubles fall upon us, how many unavailing hours pass over our heads, and how often we are forced to bestir ourselves to very little purpose of our own; there is a probable presumption that all these things turn some how or other to the account of other Beings. So that our little concerns and transactions may be of greater importance than we imagine, and ourselves made unknowingly to work out the advantage of fellow-creatures, whereof we have not the least knowledge, nor even suspicion. Nor need we want hopes from the goodness of God, that we shall one day reap the benefit of those services wherein we have been made, though undesignedly, instrumental.

But how simple and confined, or how extensive and complicated schemes soever we may conceive contained within the divine plan, the stumbling block of compulsion upon free Agency being removed, we may conclude that every purpose comprized therein has adequate causes provided for its execution, and every cause in act, whether voluntary
or

or necessary agent, contributes its share towards the completion of some purpose.

Therefore the doctrine of universal Providence being, as it seems to me, well established, I may go on without further scruple to raise what superstructure I can upon this foundation.

C H A P. XXVII.

E Q U A L I T Y.

HAIL, glorious Liberty! thou choicest privilege of imperial man! the prerogative by which he exercises his dominion over this sublunary kingdom! Inspire a spark of thy spirit into thy votary, who has laboured through thorns and briars to collect evidence of thy charter from all ruling Providence, empowering thee to act as one of her principal ministers in executing her designs; and has produced the divine mandate to irresistible Fate, commanding him to leave an ample province for thee to range in.

But where better delightest thou to dwell than in this my native land, the happy Britain?
whose

whose sons in former times have struggled hard for thee, enduring distresses, toils and bloody conflicts, that they might transmit thy blessings to us their children. Thou hast snapped short the iron rod of despotic sway, broken through the enormous rule of Many made for One, and taught Power wherein its real strength and true glory consist. Thou hast dragged tongue-tied superstition at thy chariot wheels, and bound in fetters that dastard slave, implicit Faith, that used to fetter the very thoughts of men. Thou openest the chambers of science, bursting asunder the Ipse dixits that had barred up more than half the avenues. Thou clearest away the films from our eyes, that we may see for ourselves ; and strengthenest our feet, that we may walk without the leading string. O ! let us never part with the valuable inheritance our ancestors have left us. Nor, I trust, shall we ever suffer it to be wrested out of our hands : let us only beware that we be not beguiled by false appearances, nor enticed away from our goddess by a phantom representing her likeness.

For there are counterfeits abroad, pretenders that assume thy robes and gestures. The mimic ape Licentiousness imitates thine intrepid air and confident gait. The blatant Beast prophanes thy daring language with his unbridled

bridled tongue. Conceited Pertness teaches the new-loofened school-boy and novel-studied girl thy scorn of tutorage and controul. Irreverent Methodism, ill-copier of thine easy carriage before superiours, rushes with sawcy familiarity into the council chamber of heaven. And lion-skin'd Freethinking, safe affecter of thy bravery, insults whom thou hast disarmed, ten times slays the slain, and claims to be the sole gatherer up of thy spoils. They range the world with a boisterous rabble tagging at their heels: Clamour, Arrogance, Misrepresentation, Perverseness, Cavil, intemperate Jest, loud-laughing Mockery and hood-winked Misrule. They spare not things sacred nor prophane; but pluck the grey beard of old experience, tear the prelates lawn, revile the rulers of the people, nor refrain from the Lord's anointed. The unlucky monkeys toss all about them into confusion, and grin at the wild work they make: they scatter abroad firebrands and arrows, and cry, Are we not in sport? they delight to trip up the unwary, or entangle the feeble in their webby filaments, and then chuckle with joy to see the perplexities they have occasioned.

But thou, genuine Liberty, offspring of all-protecting Jove, and sister of Uranian Venus who dispenseth his blessings from her horn of plenty; thou lovest order and decency. For
thou

thou knowest the world is upholden by order, and the blifs of heaven maintained by free obedience. Therefore thou recommendest regularity and subordination to the sons of men. Thou standest upon law and ordinance as thy bases : rule and authority are thy supporters : sound reason and uniform prudence, the ground thou walkest upon. Discretion and cautious Reserve go before as thy harbingers, and much-enduring Charity departeth not from thy side. The modest virgins warn thee which way to direct thy steps, that thou hurt not the simple ; or cover thee with veils, that thou give them not offence. For the weak-sighted cannot sustain thy piercing look, nor the feeble stand against the brush of thy sturdy tread : when thou walkest forth in the fields of speculation, and stretchest thy ken to the distant sources of useful science.

How shall I follow thee in this adventurous course whereto thou callest me ? For the deep-thinking mind will not rest satisfied with practical knowledge, unless we trace the channels to the fountain head. But the sources of truth, as of the Nile, lie far concealed in distant regions : we have cataracts to climb, slippery ground to pass over, and stumbling blocks to remove, before we can investigate them. Give charge to thine attendant virgins that they assist me, while I strew sand
upon

upon the icy paths, and work a safe passage over the dangerous rocks of offence. Yet with all their care they cannot so plain the road as that the common traveller shall pass secure : but the steepy precipice will make him giddy, the sliding surface beguile his trembling steps, and unyielding rubs cause his feet to stumble.

O! for the warning voice of sage Pythagoras,
Hence ye prophane ! That none but the hardy
Adept might be admitted to tread the perilous
path. But thou, Goddess, in these latter times,
ordainest there shall be no concealment of
mysteries. The sons of Faustus now are the only
priests of thine oracle : they lift up the voice
on high, proclaiming every thing to every
body : they watch in the streets to gather who
so pleases to accompany us in all our excursions.
So we can only caution the too curious
traveller to beware for himself : for we are
going upon a dangerous expedition, wherein
we cannot ensure him against accidents ; being
to cut a course through unpractised ground
from the sources opened before. Wherefore if
there be any in this wise generation who
knows himself not to be an Adept, he had
better let us work for a while by ourselves,
and wait for our coming down again to the
old rivers lying within his accustomed walks.
For the water may run foul and unwholesome
through

through the new-dug channel, until being purified in its passage, he may find it suitable to his taste and digestion. But if the veteran Adept, enured to toils and dangers, to range the fields of contemplation with steady tread and sober boldness, will vouchsafe his company: let him review with us the sources we have explored, and observe which way they first discharge their stream.

2. We have examined the human mind and found that all her motions depend upon motives, thrown upon her from external objects, or conveyed by the channels of experience, education and example, or procured by her own cares and industry, whereto she was instigated by former motives. We have surveyed external nature, tracing effects to causes until we arrived at the First Cause, the origin of all activity and efficacy; acting with full intelligence of all he does, and preconcerted design of whatever shall fall out in immediate or remote consequence of his operation. From hence it follows that the whole series of events throughout the world takes precisely the course ordained by Providence: which course was heretofore supposed to run underground along the passages of a secret fatality, whose rocky banks dammed up the side bubblings of chance and freewill, drawing them forcibly into its own channel. But we
have

have cleared away the matted weeds that overhung the ground, and laid open the veins from whence those bubblings arise : whereby it appears that chance is the child of ignorance, for her workings proceed from certain causes, yet such only whose existence or tendency we want sagacity to discern ; that freewill needs no compulsive force to keep her steady, for she communicates, by antecedent and external causes giving birth to her motives, with the fountain whence all the other streams derive.

Thus nature, chance and industry, become only different channels of the same river ; and what virtues, good qualities and enjoyments, men have worked out for themselves, were as much given them as what came without their seeking : so that whatever portion of happiness every man possesses, is such and none other than was allotted him by the divine bounty. We have seen reason likewise to conclude from contemplation of the divine nature, exempt from want or passion or humour or weakness, that God is righteous in all his dealings and equal in all his ways, being no respecter of persons : that his mercy is over all his works, and that equity is the Attribute whereof we can have the clearest conception, as implying nothing more than an impartial distribution of the divine bounty

among all creatures capable of receiving it. Since then none of us have anything besides what we received from the divine bounty, and that bounty flows alike upon all ; it follows unavoidably that there must be an exact equality of fortunes among us, and the value of each person's existence, computed throughout the whole extent of his Being, precisely the same.

3. This conclusion doubtless will shock the vanity of mankind, to whom happiness itself is not welcome unless they can engross the monopoly of it to themselves ; and who esteem the advantages and accomplishments they respectively possess as the only blessings worth receiving. The politician, the soldier, the scholar, the philosopher, the rich merchant, the poet, the player and the fidler, have a sovereign contempt for each other's endowments in comparison with their own : believing themselves the peculiar favourites of fortune with respect to their mental capacities, and claiming an intrinsic merit to be found in none besides. But they will all be scandalized to find themselves put upon a level with the greasy plowman, the illiterate porter, the contemptible idiot, the unenlightened savage and the scarce human hottentot. Nevertheless let them point out wherein we have been mistaken in our premises

misses or faulty in our deductions. Let them show the single thing they have which they did not receive ; or if they worked it out for themselves, that the talents and opportunities enabling, the dispositions inclining them, were not given ; and themselves furnished by certain causes as well with inclination and spirit to will as with powers to do.

If there be some characters more agreeable in the sight of God and more deserving of his favour than others, still those characters arose either from a happy constitution and temper bestowed by nature, or from education, company and example, fallen into by good fortune ; or if we suppose a particular effusion of divine grace to make the difference, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham : so that the same Power being the Author of nature, the Guider of fortune and free Dispenser of grace, was the origin of whatever flowed upon us thro' either of those channels. When in our state of non-entity, we were all equally devoid of merit or demerit, and were called forth from thence to the stations and properties and springs of action he thought proper to allot us : nor can he see anything to engage his favour in one man rather than another, which was not nearly or remotely the effect of his bounty.

Let them next examine their ideas of the divine nature and from thence, if they can, assign a cause that should make this bounty flow unequally. I know we are all in the hands of God to give us more or less as he pleases ; nor have any of us cause to complain at receiving a smaller portion than his neighbours, for we have no demands upon him whatever : but how is it likely he does do so ? what Attribute is there to require, or even render it probable ? if justice requires that the virtuous should fare better than the vicious, yet does justice hinder that the same measure of virtue should be allotted to every one ? But our virtues must be of our own acquiring, or they will not deserve the name. Granted. Yet since the Will to make the acquisition derived from above, what rule of justice prohibits the incitements to raise that Will, and opportunities to exercise it, from being distributed to all alike ?

Let them further reflect that their talents and accomplishments contribute to the protection, the benefit or the entertainment of others ; their very piety and virtue, to be genuine, must extend their good effects beyond the possessors, to all who come within their reach : so that the rude rabble they despise, have a share in the favours bestowed upon themselves ; nor is there a man possessing
some

some extraordinary gift which was given for his own sake alone.

They may likewise consider that happiness is the only thing valuable, all other things being so in proportion as they conduce towards that: but happiness consists in the aggregate of pleasures, or rather in the balance of that above the aggregate of pains; and by pleasure we understand every satisfaction or complacency of mind, as by pain every uneasiness or disturbance. Now it has been observed in a former place that we are very bad arithmeticians in the article of pleasure, nor can keep account of one day's enjoyments, so as to compute the balance of them with the next, with any thing like the exactness we could do in our money receipts and disbursements. For we fix our eye upon one favourite object, whose value we estimate by the eagerness of desire we feel rising towards it: but desire often proves delusive, or where it does not, yet pursues intense pleasures; whereas it has been shown that those of the gentler kind yield us a larger income upon the whole. That quick sensibility which enhances our joys and enables us to feel what would not touch another, adds pungency likewise to our vexations and renders us liable to such as would not fall upon persons of duller apprehension. And if a readiness of reflection

tends to prolong our enjoyments : so likewise it does to lengthen our grievances. Cares and troubles enter the houses of the great, which the vulgar know nothing of : and comforts take up their abode in the cottage, where the rich man never sees them.

Besides that Pleasure being relative to Taste and Desire, which vary infinitely among mankind, we cannot tell what another feels by what we should feel ourselves in his situation. Many things delight us extremely, that he would not care a rush for : though we should think it dreadful to want them, he may rest fully contented without them. Labour, scarcity, nastiness, ignorance, subjection, and contempt, that would oppress us sorely, may sit light and easy upon his shoulders. And though an exchange of fortunes would be thought grievous to us, and desirable by him, which seems to imply a concession on both sides of ours having the preference ; yet is this judgement not to be depended on, as being passed upon the entrance into a new state of life, rather than the continuance in an old one. But the common labourer raised to riches, or man of affluence reduced to poverty, would feel himself affected in another manner than one who had never known the contrary : therefore is not a competent judge of his case. For Nature has established this rule
tending

tending greatly towards an equality, that our organs lose their power of affecting us by use, both pleasures and pains abating of their vigour upon frequent repetition. Habit and custom brings us to a liking of the way of life we have long continued in, and desire in some measure conforms itself to the objects usually occurring to gratify it. From all which we may justly infer, there is not such an immense difference between the happiness of men as is commonly apprehended.

4. Could we lay aside for a while our remembrance of the good and evil we have seen befalling mankind, we should be apt to conclude that the pleasures and pains, the successes and disappointments of all were in quantity alike. For though it be certain God may uncontrollably and lawfully deal with his creatures as he pleases, yet can we find no reason in any conceptions we can form of him, to believe he will please to deal with them arbitrarily, or partially: from whence it would follow, that the value of human life must be the same in all. But when we resume our observation of what passes in the world, we find our theory contradicted by experience: yet this does not totally overthrow it. For though our ideas of the divine Nature be so imperfect, that it behoves us to correct them from time to time by experience of facts:

nevertheless in matters whereof we can have no experience, they remain in full vigour. Nor can we judge any thing concerning those matters otherwise than from the best conception we can form of the character of that Being under whose disposal they lie. As clearly as we may discover upon a full and fair examination, that the conditions of men differ less in value than ordinarily imagined, there will still remain a considerable difference : nor can we help acknowledging that some possess in much larger measure, the good things of the external, the bodily, the mental, and the moral kind, than others. And in one respect the difference is too obvious and glaring to be overlooked. The aggregate of pleasures constituting happiness, is made up of their intenseness and duration jointly, and therefore, under the same circumstances of condition, must depend upon the length of life. From whence it follows undeniably, that children cut off in their cradles, do not receive the same portion as some persons who hold out their full period.

But then the perceptive Spirit, surviving after dissolution of the Body, remains capable of further enjoyments, which may compensate for those lost by its hasty separation. Thus we find by reasoning from experience, that there must be a difference in the future conditions

ditions of men, because there is in the present ; for Equity requires inequalities hereafter to compensate for inequalities here ; and if Dives receive good things now, and Lazarus evil things, the latter must then be comforted, or the other tormented. But Equity requires no greater inequalities than just enough to balance those already passed through : nor have we grounds to expect any greater, unless it should appear by and by in the sequel of these enquiries, that divine Justice requires greater differences in another life than have been made in this. Nevertheless the Attributes cannot clash with one another, nor can Justice ever run such lengths as to overthrow Equity : therefore the evils inflicted by it cannot be absolutely perpetual ; because evil falling all into one scale, the balance can never come even, unless there be time left for good to pour afterwards into the opposite. Therefore it was, that at the end of § 2. I explained an equality of fortunes by an equal value of each persons existence computed throughout the whole extent of his Being. For tho' Equity may well consist with partiality and favour in particular stages of Being, and with the various distributions of Justice according to the demerits of individuals : yet after Favour has had her Course, and Justice been satisfied, it remains that Equity should
be

be satisfied too ; which seems to require there should be a certain period assigned, wherein the accounts of all may rise to the same amount. But how long, or how short this period may be, we cannot pretend to determine : for there lies an Eternity before us, from whereout may be cut an immense length of time to pass before the balance comes even.

5. In what manner this equality shall be effected it may be difficult to conjecture, and impossible to ascertain. If we give a loose to imagination in pursuing the old heathen inventions, as sketched out in the Lecture of Pythagoras in the vision, wherein the doctrine of transmigration is extended, beyond this narrow earth with the men and animals crawling thereon, to all the states of immersion into matter throughout the Universe ; I think a scheme may be stricken out, which will appear specious, if not too closely scrutinized, and contain some particulars well worth our consideration. For one cannot well conceive a more perfect Equality than is therein represented : because tho' Existence be divided into many various forms of Being, some containing a mixture of evil, and others nothing else, yet the spiritual substance, taking its turn in rotation among the several forms

forms, the fates of all will remain alike upon having passed through the whole.

Nor yet is it necessary the whole must be run thro' in order to level accounts; although this cannot be accomplished between every migration from the Spiritual Substance, and the return into it again. For if, as holden by all Theists in general, the virtuous shall enjoy a life of happiness in the intermediate state, and pass from thence directly into the final; there must be at least two journeys through matter, to bring the balance even: and this will stretch the balancing period to an immense length; because the interval of abode among the Spiritual Substance must exceed that of the excursion from it, as much as the number of unembodied spirits does that of the embodied. But if natural evil be the consequence of moral, then only those states endowed with imperfect reason, liable to be mastered by passion, and tempted into transgression, will be hazardous states: and those of children dying in the womb, or before arriving at the use of reason, may be reckoned safe states. But Equity seems to require, that after having passed through one hazardous state, the next migrations should be through the safe, in proportion to the number there is of them in nature, which will lengthen the period still further.

6. Nor are these imaginations to be looked upon as matters of meer curiosity, fit only to amuse the speculative in an idle hour; but they may serve to enlarge our conception of our Almighty Governour, to give us a better opinion of his Creation, and render us more regardful of one another, and more attentive in our conduct to the good of our fellow creatures. For what can raise our idea higher of the Glory, the Power, the Greatness, the Magnificence, the Benignity of God, than to imagine his vast Empire, the Universe, fully inhabited, all space, not occupied by matter, being replete with spiritual substance, continually receiving supplies of happiness from his inexhaustible bounty? What can better exemplify his exact Equity, and Impartiality among his children, than to describe him allotting them a like share of abode in all the many mansions throughout their Father's house? What can approach our conception of his goodness nearer to infinitude, or make us better pleased and satisfied with our existence, than that immense disproportion of good to evil dispersed over his boundless dominion?

Many learned men have assigned the corporeal machinery whereto we are vitally united, for the origin, as they call it, of evil, or, as I should rather term it, the sole channel by which that odious stream is cast upon us. I

know

know that, so far as we may take experience for our guide, we have reason to believe our perceptions of all kinds, our enjoyments, as well as our pains and troubles, come upon us by the action of matter : but there is great difference between a vital union therewith, and a voluntary or occasional application thereto, in such manner and such times as we choose to make it ; between perceptions impressed mechanically or necessarily, and those selected by spiritual substance, to be communicated for mutual benefit. Our Goods, our utensils, and instruments of diversion, answer our convenience and entertainment, while we can take them up, or lay them aside as we please : but did they grow to our hands, we should find them a great hinderance and trouble to us in all our motions. Our cloaths serve us to good purpose for protection and ornament, because we can pull them off, and put on others, as we will : but were they adhering to our skin, we must endure grievous smart and torment to get rid of them when worn ragged. Now if we compare the small quantity of matter existent, with the vast expanse containing it, we must conclude, that for every Spirit imprisoned in some body, or organization, there are many millions of millions lying at large in the voids between. And so great will be the length of our abode in our own country,

country, the spiritual substance, totally exempt from evil, in comparison with our excursion through the vale of mortality.

Nor is it a small confirmation of these suppositions, that our clearest ideas of goodness incline us to believe, that God never terminates his views ultimately upon evil, nor sends it unless for some greater good to be produced thereby. Then if we cast about in our thoughts for the manner how evil may produce good, it must occur that our industry for the most part is employed in the avoidance of mischief, or preservation of what enjoyments, or means of enjoyment, we possess : so that a man without notion of any hurt or damage that could befall him, would have no inducement to bestir himself at all, and thereby lose all the pleasure he feels in the exercise of his activity : and this might probably be the case with all created spirits, however circumstanced. But the bare apprehension of mischief, seen falling upon others, will answer the purpose, yet the mischief must fall somewhere for us to see it : but the sufferings of a few may raise an apprehension of it in multitudes. Therefore gross bodies, and fine corpuscles of matter, are dispersed up and down, at proper distances, throughout the Universe, that there may be samples every where of actual suffering, or loss of happiness through ignorance
and

and misconduct, among the spirits imprisoned therein, for spurring up the disengaged to activity.

We may remark likewise, upon our own experience, that a small degree of pain and disappointment, like sours and bitters mixed in fauces, gives a zest to our pleasures. So it is in games of chance, where the variations of luck, and opposition of the adversary, furnish the amusement: so it is in sports of the field, where the labours and difficulties of the chase create the diversion: so it is in the common affairs of life, where little displeasures and disappointments hold us closer to the engagement; and were there a man who should never meet a cross or rub in his desires, perhaps he would pass his time the most insipidly of any creature breathing. What then should hinder but that the pure spirits, by applying externally to the sensories of the embodied and inorganized, may take such sensations of all disagreeable kinds therefrom, and communicate them among one another, as they find requisite to give a smartness and a poignancy to their own enjoyments? Or if they stand so happily circumstanced as to have nothing to do for promoting or securing their own bliss, they may make it their sole contrivance and employment to lessen, as much as possible, the burthens of their immersed brethren, of the
same

same origin and capacities with themselves. As some people, having nothing else to do, find their whole amusement in the tendency and nurture of birds, or other animals, supplying them constantly with such accommodations, and pleasures, as they are capable of enjoying equally with themselves. Only with this difference between the two cases, that the former do not their work by occasional or arbitrary operations, but by administering the laws of nature, and courses of fortune ordained by the Almighty.

Now if any body shall ask the Pythagorean how he knows these things to be as above imagined, the latter will ask in return, how his antagonist knows they cannot be so: and whether if the phenomena falling under our observation leave an equal uncertainty on both sides, he does not think their congruity with our best ideas of the divine attributes a weight inclining the balance in their favour. Nor need he be afraid of indulging such imaginations, which if a mistake, are pleasing and innocent, or I may rather say, a lucky and beneficial mistake.

7. For wherever fully entertained, they must effectually banish all pride, self-sufficiency, contempt, and claim to superior merit, all malice, rancour, revenge, and hardness of heart: there being no intrinsic and personal,
but

but only a circumstantial and temporary, difference between man and man ; who are all drawn from the same spiritual substance, but diversly lodged and accommodated for the present, and must take their turn in rotation through the several habitations occupied by one another. So that the oppressor and the scorner may actually stand one day in the very place of the persons they injure, or despise.

Yet this consideration, taken partially, may be perverted to bad purposes : for the thought of our being intrinsically as good as the nobles and princes above us, will be more apt to engender pride than to mortify it, unless we reflect at the same time, that the black shoe boy, and the cinder wench, are as good as ourselves. Neither does this reflection hinder that we should behave differently to different persons, as they stand circumstanced upon earth : for order and public good require us to respect them according to their several stations, situations, and endowments. The Senator of ancient Rome, or Alderman of the present times, have always owed an obedience to the Consul, or Mayor, for the time being, whom perhaps they might command in the succeeding year. And in all the changes of state officers, the people are to take their directions successively from those whom

they find invested with power ; yet perhaps without esteeming them better qualified, or more meritorious, than others whose places they supply. For in reverencing the ministers, we reverence the prince, who lends them his authority, when and how long he judges proper : and in paying the respect and honour severally belonging to power, rank, learning, sagacity, riches, and other favours of Heaven, we respect and honour the supreme Monarch, who giveth and taketh away as he pleases.

Nevertheless if the value of every one's existence, computed throughout the whole extent of his being, be equal, and the same with our own ; we shall retain an inward esteem for the person of every man equally with ourselves, notwithstanding some adventitious temporary difference there may be between us. Just as if we found a person of our own rank and fortune, but at a distance from his estate, struggling with hardship and distress, for want of convenient remittances ; or if we saw one of equal understanding and sagacity with ourselves, under some distemper that stupified him for a while : we should still esteem them both upon a par with ourselves. And as esteem naturally begets love, this will go a great way towards bringing us into obedience to that grand precept, both of natural and revealed Religion,

ligion, to love our neighbour as ourselves. It will give us a fellow-feeling of all the pains, distresses, vexations, and even little disappointments, or cross accidents, we see: for upon the Hypothesis of a rotation, we shall ourselves stand, some time or other, in the situation wherein we behold another.

Nor can we harbour an inveterate hatred against any body: for Achilles and Hector, the Pope and Calvin, Charles and Cromwell, our bitterest enemy, if we have one, and ourselves, may chance in some future migration to be intimates, coparceners in interest, father and son, or husband and wife. Or if this should never happen, still during our long abode in the Mundane Soul, we shall become bosom friends, living in perfect uninterrupted harmony, pursuing each others interests and pleasures alike ardently with our own, and joining in one form of adoration to the Author of our unspeakable happiness. And tho' we may be forced many times to bring punishment, vexation, and displeasure, upon others, we shall never do it in anger, nor willingly, nor unconcernedly, but as an unavoidable means for attaining some greater good, or in compliance with the rules of prudence and justice, founded upon expedience. For we shall regard vice as a distemper of the mind, and afford what help and comfort to

the patient the circumstances of his case will admit: wishing well to the offender, while we detest the offence, as the symptom of a loathsome and infectious disease.

8. And as we readily think well of those to whom we wish well, we shall not be so forward to censure, and calumniate, and damn one another, as many of us are; but make all fair allowance for errors and miscarriages, and strive to extend the hope of salvation, as far as there can be found any solid ground to support it. Selfishness and insensibility to all around us, seem to be made the characteristics of high perfection in Religion: our fellow-creatures of a different language, or make, or way of thinking, or sentiment on some speculative point, are not thought worth our concern; but so we ourselves, together with a few of the same orthodox stamp, be safe, the devil take all the world beside, as deserving victims of a divine wrath never to be appeased. For my part, I cannot help being shocked to hear with what calmness the most pious people will talk of the innumerable multitudes that are to perish in everlasting flames: and with what glee the Methodists regale upon the thought, that at the day of Judgement, the rich and mighty of this world shall be dragged by devils for Whitefield and his

his mob of carmen and basket-women to trample under foot.

Nor do the Freethinkers less contract the pale of their Church : for tho' they affect to ridicule Satan and his brimstone, yet they have a damnation of their own, which they spread as liberally, and as unreluctantly, as the fiery Papist, the rigid Presbyterian, or the enthusiastic Methodist. For they tell you that right reason is the only road to happiness in this world and the next ; but when you come to examine what right reason is, you will find it confined to their particular notions, or those of a few choice spirits of their own cast : and all the rest of mankind, being infected more or less with bigotry and superstition, must inevitably fall into misery and unhappiness, from which God himself cannot rescue them. For tho' he be merciful, incapable of revenge, nor ever angry with anybody, yet he durst not interpose, for fear Dame Necessity, enthroned above him in her eternal and unalterable nature of things, should take it amiss.

But if we claim no more than an equality among our brethren, the children of the same Father, and subjects of the same Kingdom, we shall look upon the states of suffering as sinks and cess-pools of the Universe, to drain off the evil therein from all the rest ; and the

drudgery of wading thro' them, as a necessary service to be shared in rotation by all alike. This of course will turn our prejudice the contrary way, and set us upon hunting for arguments to contract the number and lessen the misery of them, so far as we can find warrant in calm and impartial reason. And we shall become solicitous to inculcate other incitements to virtue, in order to render the necessity of multiplying terrors among mankind as little as possible. But as Charity covers a multitude of sins and blemishes, so it likewise discovers a world of good qualities and external advantages, that escape the eye of the sordid and narrow minded. Our idea of equality and rotation will make us glad to find enjoyments, valuable possessions, and excuses for misconduct of others, in cases which may one day become our own: and our desire will quicken our sagacity in finding more of them than could be well imagined before setting out. We shall discern pleasures where we could have tasted none ourselves, comforts under burthens that would have galled us extremely, prudence in measures that we should have esteemed foolish, unavoidable mistake in what we should have judged perverseness, and sources of enjoyment we should never have dreamt of.

This

This must redound to our own benefit, by opening a more delightful prospect of Nature than we could otherwise have obtained : for we shall regard ourselves as citizens of the World, interested in every thing passing there, tho' not immediately concerning us ; and shall behold with pleasure the various blessings and salves for every sore, diffused every where, whereof we are to be partakers in some form of being, or other. We shall esteem every thing, even vexation, disappointment, and punishment, as useful, and consider the mischiefs and troubles befalling ourselves or our dearest friends, as the purchase of a portion in those scenes of lasting bliss, which they are a necessary foundation to support. And as the pressure of our grievances encreases, we may from thence augurate how great must be those treasures of happiness, which our indulgent and tender Father judges worth our purchasing at so high a price. Nor need we be disturbed at the displeasures we are forced sometimes to bring upon one another, every unavoidable evil being a purchase of something more valuable than the payment. I dont know whether I shall give offence by taking notice, that the brutes often end their lives in misery and torment, and inferring from thence, that since God, who never terminates his views upon evil, calls upon

them too for their payments, he will find methods of securing to them likewise their purchase. This we may look upon as our warrant for those slaughters, and hard services, we put them to for our necessary occasions : but will not justify us in abusing them wantonly. For whatever evil we bring needlessly either upon man or beast, however it may be a purchase for them, will purchase nothing for ourselves, but what we shall vehemently dislike when we enter upon the possession.

9. Nevertheless I more than suspect that exceptions have occurred to the Reader against this doctrine of rotation ; for, to say the truth, they have occurred to me, and in a formidable aspect : yet the advantages we have found resulting therefrom were the temptation with me to pursue it until I could reach them. And the like purpose may plead my excuse for employing it again hereafter occasionally in the like service : for whatever, whether fable, or hypothesis, gives scope to salutary reflections and opens imagination to the reception of good sentiments, which may find establishment afterwards upon some better foundation, may be allowably applied that way. But notwithstanding that these advantages give the doctrine an inviting look, while holden with their side towards the eye, it will scarce

scarce be judged tenable, when turned round for examination on another quarter.

For it supposes a pre-existence, and a future fall of the blessed spirits into weakness, sin, and misery: both which are contrary to the generally received opinion, That our entrance into human life was the beginning of our existence, and That it is appointed all men once to die, and then to judgement, whereby their fates will be fixed so as never more to change. But the most fatal and invincible objection is this, that it must appear shocking to the thought and what no man can admit the supposition of, that he himself, and the most righteous person ever living, shall, in some future migration, become a reprobate, a thief, a debauchee, a murtherer, prophane, sacrilegious, atheistical, obnoxious to the utmost severities of divine justice. For though many pious people can think with calmness and indifference on the multitudes of other persons doomed to eternal punishment by an absolute decree, or drawn thereinto by the unlucky circumstances of their birth, education, and company, cast upon them by Providence: yet if you suggest a bare possibility of themselves becoming the objects of vengeance, tho' at the remotest distance of time, they feel it abhorrent to their thoughts, nor can ever bring it reconcilable with their idea of infinite

nite goodness. So partial are we to ourselves, that what appears agreeable to righteousness, and mercy, and goodness, in the case of another, we see plainly cannot be so upon supposal of the case being our own ! For these imperfections therefore we must reject this scheme of a rotation, and however it may be innocently entertained for a while as an hypothesis, so long as serving any profitable purpose, we can by no means receive it as an article of faith.

10. Let us then look for some other way wherein to account for an equality : and this we have already found in Chap. 19 § 18. For the balance may be levelled by an amends made in value to the sufferer, without any other person suffering at all : because an encrease of good in one scale will have the like effect with a weight of evil thrown into the other. If Dives receive good things, and Lazarus evil things, the latter must be comforted, or the former tormented. I give this conclusion in the disjunctive, because either branch will answer the purpose : although Dives had not been tormented, yet such ample comforts might have been afforded to Lazarus as would have made his fortune equal upon the whole with that of the other. Nor is it at all impossible that God may have such treasures of mercy in store, that the party receiving them shall see he was not unequally dealt

dealt with by the severest degrees of punishment which divine Justice judged fitting to inflict upon him.

Many learned and pious men hold two future states, an intermediate and a final, and tho the former be a state of happiness to the virtuous, yet the bliss of the latter will be incomparably greater. Why then may not the balance be evened by the period of suffering being made so much shorter than that of the intermediate happiness, as that the quicker passage obtained thereby into the final, may compensate for the evils undergone?

Or it may be that the reprobate shall, after a length of time which nobody can limit, be brought to a right mind by the extremity of their torments so as to take an utter detestation against the courses which brought them thereinto, to feel a sincere and ardent love of virtue, stronger than can be attained in this life: whereby they may obtain a higher seat of happiness during the remainder of the intermediate state, and so, like Lazarus, be comforted to a degree that will bring their fortunes equal upon the whole with those who have not been tormented.

Or as suggested in the Vision § 35, the state of punishment may be naturally eternal, as that of fallen man was, and the compensation brought about by a miraculous interposition,

sition, or irresistible grace, bringing them to a tenour of mind which may make them become objects of reward, instead of wrath they were before. For we must always bear in mind that virtue is the sole and certain road to happiness, as wickedness is to misery; therefore if a deliverance ever be effected, it must be worked out by a *Metanoia*, which we translate Repentance, that is, a thorough change of disposition and character: so that there must be an equality of virtues, before there can possibly be an equality of fortunes.

II. It may perhaps be deemed inconsistent with our ideas of goodness to imagine that he who is the fountain of it, and in whom it is inexhaustible, will inflict intolerable torments upon persons who are so far the object of that Attribute, as that he designs them an equal portion of happiness upon the whole with his best, and most favoured servants. But let us reflect upon what we have already seen in the Chapter upon that article, how imperfect our ideas of Goodness are, and wrong beyond our skill to rectify them, or discover in what particular point their deficiency lies. Were we to follow them implicitly, we must conclude there is neither pain, nor distress, nor disappointment, nor uneasiness of any kind in the world: but this

this conclusion daily experience forbids, and thereby throws us quite off our reckoning. We acknowledge God infinitely good, and the permission of evil forces us likewise to acknowledge a mixture of it consistent with infinite goodness: but what limitation that Attribute must set to the mixture, or what proportion to good it must require we have no rule to ascertain. The most we can gather with tolerable assurance is this, that the good must greatly preponderate the evil: but we know the riches of God are inexhaustible, so that he may have enjoyments in store for his creatures, sufficient to compensate either by their intenseness, or duration, for the severest sufferings we can imagine.

I know Wollaston lays down, that there are some pains a wise man would not choose to undergo upon any consideration whatsoever; and I am so far from contradicting him, that instead of advising anybody to choose, or even run the hazard of, the pains I have been speaking of, I would exhort him earnestly to use all his wits and diligence to escape them: nor do I believe any man ever did run the hazard deliberately upon the recommendation of such wisdom as our frail nature is capable of, but whenever they are incurred, it is always owing to the prevalence of folly, or corrupt appetite, overpowering, or perverting

ing

ing the judgement. But may there not likewise be some enjoyments so engaging, that the wiseman would not forego them upon any consideration? We see daily how intense pleasures drive men knowingly into grievous mischiefs. For the strongest idea always carries our choice, and it is difficult to raise so lively an imagination of what we have in prospect, as of what we feel. The wise man may bring himself by long practice to do this better than another, yet he is still but a man: and where the impression either of pleasure or pain is very strong, he will scarce be able to find anything in his stores of reflection to overpower it. So all this amounts to no more, than that the present outweighs the future in our estimation.

But the wisdom of God is greater than that of the wise man, and his views more capacious: to him a thousand years are but as one day: for he sees things in their essences, not by their representative ideas, which the strongest of us can raise no higher than the narrowness of his organs will permit. Therefore we cannot judge what he will choose for his creatures by what the wisest of them would choose for himself: for he may discern the greatest evils he inflicts to be no more, compared with the bliss beyond, than the plucking a hair out of a man's beard, to a year of health, and plenty and pleasure.

Thus

Thus much we may rest assured of, that punishment is inflicted by the same God, infinitely good and gracious, and merciful, who gives rewards to the righteous : therefore there can be nothing in it not consistent with goodness. Neither does he punish in anger, but for the benefit necessarily to result therefrom to the rest of his creation : whence it follows there may be a good redounding to make the punishment appear eligible to infinite wisdom, and if the good of others can render it so, there is less difficulty in comprehending that a compensation to the party himself may weigh with equal force. Besides the most pious persons, who think themselves most intimately persuaded of God being infinitely good, do not stagger at the doctrine of punishment absolutely eternal inflicted upon far the greater part of mankind, including children born out of the Christian pale : if then an inveteracy of vengeance, never to be satisfied, nor appeased to all eternity, be compatible with their idea of infinite goodness, surely a temporary suffering to be followed some time or other, tho' nobody knows when, by a course of virtue, reconciliation, and happiness, is much more so.

12. Yet there is no encouragement to evil doing upon prospect of the solace to follow after an immeasurable length of misery : for
tho'

tho' divine wisdom may discern the compensation to be adequate, yet there are sufferings so shocking to human nature, that no man who does not shut his eyes against them, can submit to undergo them willingly upon any account : so there is no ground for the sinner to avail himself of what shall happen after so long an interval. Moralists indeed exhort men continually to regard the future alike with the present, but there is a moderation in all things : one may stretch ones view too far, as well as confine it too near. He that goes along with his eye fixed upon the ground, will be liable to miss his way, or run into danger ; so we exhort him to look up, that he may see the windings of the path before him, and take direction from the bearings of the country : but if he keep gaping at the distant horizon, it will be as bad as to keep poring upon the ground. The proper measure of our regards for the future, is their usefulness : for our speculations and our apprehensions, as well as our actions, ought to bear a reference to use. Therefore moral exhortations urge us to consider the remotest consequences of our conduct, but remain indifferent to events whereon that can have no influence. And if we are enjoined against an unavailing solicitude for the morrow, because sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof : much more must

must it be faulty to stretch our eye to a distant good beyond the reach of mortal ken, when it can only tend to make us careless in guarding against intolerable mischiefs running along the line between to a length which cannot be computed. Since then our condition in the next life will depend upon our behaviour here, it behoves us to hold that object constantly in view for keeping us circumspect and diligent in our proceedings: but what further returns of life may lie beyond the next, will not be affected by anything done now, so we have nothing to do, nor to think of with respect to them.

Or if the sinner could be assured that he might purchase an adequate compensation by incurring the utmost severity of torments, there could be no prudence in accepting the terms, because he can get nothing by the bargain, nor have any advantage upon the whole over those who reject it: for the compensation must be barely equal to the suffering, or the equality between him and such as do not so purchase it, will be destroyed. For my part I had rather bear a little tooth-ach once a month, than racking pains of the stone once in seven years, though I were assured the quantity of both should be alike: much more had I rather escape such racking

pains, than endure them to purchase a pleasure but just equal to their weight.

And I believe he would scarce choose to go through the severe persecutions of the primitive Christians: he had rather content himself without that greater weight of glory they earned thereby. Yet they acted prudently, the purchase being much more valuable than the price demanded, and they being supported under the burthen of the payment by their glowing hope in the mercies of God, who was able to recompense them abundantly for their labours. But the sinner will not have this hope to support him, for he will see God only in wrath and vengeance, the amiable parts of his character will be hidden from his eyes: and when the soul is reduced to that worst of agonies, not to be borne by any meer creature, so as to cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? this is a situation that no wise man, or I may say no man in his senses, having a just apprehension of his danger, but would do his utmost to escape. Therefore we find those who are in these dreadful courses, armed with an insensibility that stupifies them against all alarms. They can familiarise themselves with the thought of devils, as of a diverting story, and make merry with their tortures, as with the tricks of a Harlequin: they have no feeling

ing but for the present, and are wholly regardless of what shall befall them in time to come: agreeably to that ancient saying, Whom Jove would destroy he infatuates.

13. There may still lie another exception against the theory of compensation, which will be thought enough to overthrow all arguments whatever that can be produced in its favour: for many will count it heterodox, as contradicting that endless duration of punishment so strongly inculcated in our sacred oracles. But there have been persons of eminent piety, and great knowledge in the holy Scriptures, who have given them a milder construction: such as our learned Archbishop Tillotson, and one of the primitive fathers, Origen, who cannot be suspected of too hasty a temper in departing from the literal sense, since he adhered too closely to it in that text which speaks of some who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven.

And there is one passage in Luke 16, which seems to countenance the doctrine of equity by employing it as a principle of reasoning, in the answer made by Abraham to the rich man, which term we commonly turn into a proper name, and call Dives: for Abraham does not alledge the former behaviour of Dives and Lazarus, but their former fortunes to account for the present difference between

them. The commentators in the Synopsis tell us, that “it will add to the torments of the
“damned, to hear and consider the former
“means and advantages they have been under
“for salvation, if they have descended from
“godly parents, or have been members of the
“Church of Christ:” therefore Abraham called him, Son, to encrease his vexation by putting him in mind of his godly lineage, and communion with the true Church. I dont know upon what authority they assign the office of a devil to the father of the faithful, making him forward to heighten the torments of the damned: his answer seems rather to bespeak a sentiment of mildness and compassion: the appellation of Son or Child, is an expression of fondness: he can give little comfort, tis true, but v^t he can, he gives him, which tends only to teach him patience by reflecting on the equitableness of his treatment. As if he had said, Be content, my child, you have no hardship done you: remember that Providence cast you into a state of enjoyment in the other world, and Lazarus into wretchedness; it is but reason the tables should now be turned, that you should be the unhappy man, and he comforted. And lest he should be mortified at thinking himself utterly abandoned and neglected by the blessed Spirits, the patriarch takes care to let

let him know this was not the case, and that it was not for want of Will, but of Power, that he did not hasten to endeavour some relief for him : for besides all this there is a great chasm, or vacuity between us and you, neither ground to walk upon, water to swim, nor air to fly along, so there is no possibility of passage from one to the other.

From hence we may gather that the glorified Saints, who do the Will of God as it is done in heaven, not as it is done upon earth, that is, invariably and knowingly, still have a tender regard for their unhappy brethren lying under the divine vengeance. And since they enjoy the beatific vision, we may take their sentiments for true copies of the glorious original they contemplate : from whence may be inferred that God himself bears the like tender regard ; nor can we doubt whether any to whom he bears such regard, shall ever fail of receiving the good effects of it in due time, as soon as the necessary services of the universe, to be worked out by their sufferings, shall be compleated.

Observe moreover, that the answer to Dives being framed upon this principle, there was room for him to draw a further consolation from it than was expressed : for the change of conditions between him and Lazarus being put upon the footing of equity, without any notice taken of reward and punishment, if his

sufferings were so intense as to cast the balance much lower in his disfavour, than it had ever been raised to his advantage before, he might augurate that the same equity would require there should be an amends kept in store for him, sufficient to bring the balance exactly even between both: for it could hardly consist with equity that, because one had lived in pleasure and the other in wretchedness forty or fifty years, therefore the latter must be comforted and the former tormented to all eternity. Nor would the unnavigable gulph utterly exclude his hopes, for though declared impassable in width, nothing was said to show it immeasurable in length: so he might think it not impossible that, by a long journey round the coast, he might arrive at the end of it, where he should find the region of darkness joining with that of light.

I know very well that texts are best interpreted by construing everything with a reference to the principal design for which they were delivered, but that design in the parable before us, can scarce be thought having anything to do with equality; it is generally holden to look no further than the persuading such as possess the good things of this world, to make such prudent application of them as may improve their interests in futurity. Yet
nothing

nothing is more common than to draw separate inferences from particular expressions, which have no relation to the main tenour of the context: the Synopsis writers have done it copiously upon this very parable. And there is the better reason for building upon occasional hints in the present case, because it is not a subject proper to be entered upon professedly in a gospel preached to the poor, nor fit to be ranked among those things which are written in such legible characters, as that he who runs may read: therefore no more could be expected than a slender hint, or by-intimation, for this is enough to the considerate who have ears to hear, and more might have been mischievous to the inconsiderate. Besides, those who believe every part of the gospels dictated by the Holy Ghost, with a view to the instruction of future ages, as well as of the first disciples, may the more easily admit, there might be something in this parable not convenient to be too strongly insisted upon, because of its being omitted by the other three evangelists.

14. And I am so sensible of the inexperience there may be in descanting upon these topics of equality and compensation among the generality, that I should gladly have suppressed them, if the course of my argument would have permitted me. For I am of a

more timid constitution than Tillotson, nor, had I been authorized to speak from the pulpit, should have ventured so far there as he has gone: yet we do not find his discourse has done mischief in the world, or sapped any part in the foundations of Religion. I have remarked before in § 10 of the Vision, that the ancients had an advantage over us moderns, for dealing out their tenets in parcels by lectures to different companies, they could adapt their discourses to their audience, whereas we, who have none other way of communicating our thoughts than by the press, are forced to pour out all promiscuously before all comers. So can do no more than I have already done in the introductory section of this Chapter, by cautioning the too curious traveller to take that care of himself, which it is not in my power to take for him, and to leave me during my excursions, waiting until he sees me come down again to the old channels running along within his accustomed purlieus. Or should he despise this warning as believing it useless to himself, still it is my comfort to think that I am not in a situation to prove dangerous anywhere: the thinking, who can judge for themselves, will be led by nobody, so I cannot mislead them; and the populace, whenever misled, are drawn by a great name and authority, which I neither expect,

expect, nor pretend to, nor desire; so they can never be hurt by an obscure man, who has neither title, nor dignity, nor a seat in the House, nor yet those spiritual gifts which make the possessor powerful in utterance, able to draw followers by thousands, to all the several skirts around this great Metropolis.

But though not bounden to such strict guard upon my steps as the eminent and the popular, neither have I thrown out things wantonly and thoughtlessly, nor unless compelled thereto by the necessity of attaining my principal aim: which was effectually to recommend universal Charity, that sum of natural Religion, and grand cardinal virtue, whereon are declared to hang all the law and the prophets. For without an equality I could find no certain means for coming at the mutual connection of interests between all perceptive creatures throughout the universe, intended for the subject of the next ensuing Chapter: because if there be any doomed to miseries absolutely eternal, there can be no participation of interests between them and other creatures. But such connection seemed to me the only medium discernible by the light of nature wherewith Charity might be established on its surest bottom, Self-interest, by showing that it is rather a
measure

measure of highest prudence, than an obligation of duty. And none other ways have occurred to me, by which an equality may be effected, besides those suggested above. So that the valuableness of my principal aim may atone for running some little hazard of giving offence in the manner of pursuing it.

I shall add further that my concern lies only with the point of equality: nor have I a fondness for the theory of compensation any longer than while it appears a necessary avenue to that. If another method can be found by which an equality may be made out, or if it shall be ranked among those mysteries which we must admit tho' we cannot explain them, it will serve my purpose as well.

But the arguments evincing an equality, as set out in § 2. 3. appear to me irrefragable, and whoever would controvert them, ought to prove, either that the virtues we possess are entirely our own, not derived from God by the channel of his grace, nor a dispensation of his ordinary Providence in our favour, or else that he is partial, creating some to everlasting bliss, and others to everlasting misery. Therefore until one of those two points be clearly made out, I may look upon the doctrine of equality as sufficiently established, and take it for the foundation of what I have next to offer.

C H A P. XXVIII.

G E N E R A L G O O D.

IT has been frequently said, that if horses knew their own strength, they would never submit to all the drudgeries and hardships they are made to undergo. But it might with better justice be said, that if men knew the force of that reason and discretion in their power to exert, they would never submit to all those inconveniencies, troubles and vexations, they might relieve themselves from by a proper application of these talents. For there is industry and contrivance enough in quantity throughout the world, to supply all our wants and desires; they fail only through misapplication. We see daily how indefatigable men are in their several pursuits, how vigilant in watching opportunities to gratify a predominant passion, how attentive and sagacious in practising little artifices to compass a favorite purpose. But the misfortune is, that they spend their industry for the most part upon trifles, or in the service of some fond humour suggested accidentally by fancy, or at best for the accomplishment of narrow views, terminating solely upon themselves.

Whereas

Whereas the most beneficial enterprizes can only be atchieved by the united endeavours of many, concurring in some work that may redound to the advantage of them all. We see this exemplified in the benefits of society, where the operations of war, the conveniencies of commerce, and regulations of civil policy, are promoted by the persons concerned acting in partnership and concert. The common transactions of life go on more easily, and conversation becomes more agreeable, for a readiness to assist and oblige.

Nature designed the whole species for one society, as we may judge from the variety of productions serviceable to all, the different materials and opportunities for cultivating the arts and sciences, which she has distributed about among the countries upon earth : so that no one of them furnishes the accommodations of life compleatly without communication with the rest. But folly, selfishness and passion, have prevented our growing into a vigorous healthy body ; we are a disjointed multitude, each caring only for himself, and thereby losing those innumerable advantages we might work out by our unanimity. Whose place is ill supplied by succedaneums, such as the desire of riches or honour, the lash of necessity or dread of dangers too glaring to escape our dull optics : which prove a feeble cement

ment to join us into those partial societies and temporary engagements conveying the blessings we do enjoy. Nay what is worse, our greediness and ill humour often drive us to endeavour the damage and displeasure of one another : which occasions a double waste of industry, by obliging others, who might employ it better, to apply theirs in relieving or defending themselves against our attacks. But unanimity cannot subsist without universal charity and unreserved goodwill, which nothing can better promote than the persuasion of there being a real connection of interests and mutual dependence of happiness among mankind : and this persuasion our doctrine of equality seems particularly well suited to propagate.

2. It was with a view to bring men better disposed towards one another that I entred upon my task. For how much soever I may have seemed to trifle and play the wanton sometimes, I have all along had grand designs in my eye, being no less than to contribute, so far as in me lay, towards exciting a general concern and mutual benevolence among my fellow creatures. For I cannot help being persuaded that if this could be compleatly effected, so as that every man should become a friend and hearty well-wisher to every man, this alone would restore a paradise upon earth ; although
earth-

earthquakes should still continue to overthrow, tempests to sweep away, blights to destroy, and wild beasts to devour, as usual : for I doubt not that the united skill and labours of mankind might remove all intolerable evils, and teach the art of bearing easily all that could not be avoided. Yet I am not so romantic as to think of compleating this design, or even making any large stride towards it. But Rome was not built in a day, nor by the hands of a single labourer : yet years and ages are composed of days, and the most stupendous works performed by numbers made up of single labourers.

The world seems growing more humanized, more enlarged in their notions, and readier to take concern in distant joys and sorrows, than they were in former times : and as these advances are made insensibly by particular persons, each contributing a little towards promoting them, it becomes every one to lend a helping hand to so salutary a work, in such way as he finds himself best suited to take. As I have not much intercourse among mankind, nor acquired an expertness in the management of topics prevailing with the Many : it seemed that I could not do better than address myself to the thinking and studious, by collecting a chain of observations which might serve as a hint for them to improve, towards
bringing

bringing themselves into a conformity of sentiment and openness of temper. For if, instead of entering the lists as adversaries contending for victory, they would consider one another as persons consulting together upon the methods of accomplishing a purpose they all had at heart: however they might vary for a while, they could not be long without discerning which were the best. And if they would employ their talents sincerely for the public good, in preference to any private views or favourite schemes or precontracted prejudices, they must quickly draw the rest of the world after them. For the multitude are ready enough to follow their leaders; nor ever desert them, unless enticed away by opposite leaders.

But to deal with the sagacious and deep-thinking one must go to the bottom of things, for they will not take up with strong assertions nor superficial appearances, how shining soever: but to bring them into one mind one must proceed upon premises they can examine themselves and approve of. Therefore they fail in their transactions among one another by dealing too much in abstractions, ideal differences of right and wrong, of laudable and blamable, and intrinsic value of rules and qualities: which as men's ideas vary infinitely, being modelled ac-
cording

according to their several turns of thought, they can never settle to mutual satisfaction. For this reason I have endeavoured to dig down to a foundation they will all agree strong enough to bear a superstructure: for I suppose the most righteous and unprejudiced will allow it commendable for a man to do what he can for himself, provided he do no hurt to another thereby, nor thwart any rule of Religion or duty. Therefore self-interest of itself is a proper consideration to put us upon action: and I have taken this for my basis to work upon. It must be owned indeed that all others propose happiness and truest interest, as the ultimate aim to be attained by their several systems: but then they either carry their road through the wilds of abstraction, or take large leaps from stage to stage, by which methods they do not render the continuity visible even to one another. Therefore I have been careful to keep my feet all along upon the solid ground of experience, employing such abstractions and reasonings from time to time as could be drawn thereupon, and attempting to trace the connection step by step from self-interest to the virtues: so that whoever thinks fit to follow me may do it without leaping hedges or flying in the air, and judge for himself in what particulars I have been defective.

Only

Only I must desire he will distinguish between excursions I make for illustration or for removing obstructions that would stop my passage or for other particular purposes, and the main parts of my road conducting directly towards the journey's end.

I have examined human nature and found that Satisfaction, every man's own satisfaction, is the spring that actuates all his motions. I have investigated the sources of satisfaction, which is conveyed for the most part through the channel of desire; observed that desire may be turned into new courses by good management; enquired what turns of desire afford the most copious stream; and shown that the ideas exciting desire derive, nearly or remotely, from external and prior causes. I have then proceeded to the contemplation of external nature; and from thence attempted to rise to the Author of nature, together with so much as can be discovered from his works concerning his attributes and character: wherein there appears no weakness nor humour, no spark of arbitrary or inequitable disposition, but unre-served and unningardly goodness. From this height I have returned downwards, to show that all causes in act derive their efficacy and destination from the act of the First, exerted with certain foreknowledge and deliberate

design of whatever should follow thereupon. I have likewise scrutinized minutely the motions of freewill, explained the difference between necessity and certainty, and shown the consistence of liberty with pre-appointment; whereby it appears that human action is among the causes depending in a chain upon the First. From all this I have concluded that all events, whether yielding enjoyment or trouble, effected as well by the choice and activity of man as by chance or nature, were of the divine provision: and this provision being made in perfect equity, that there is an equality of happiness, upon the whole balance of good and evil, allotted to every creature.

Thus far we have travelled already, and our next step shall be, from this equality to deduce a reciprocal connection of interests among the creation: from whence will naturally flow a universal charity and steady attention to the general good. As to the methods whereby this is most effectually promoted, these are copious enough to supply materials for another work, if we should have strength and opportunity to undertake it: it is enough that we furnish ourselves here with a fundamental and ruling principle of action, in lieu of that we had established before. For we set out at first with the position, that
a man

a man has nothing else to do than pursue his own interests in such way as his judgement shall represent most feasible and effectual: nor need we still recant our opinion, but having found our own interest indissolubly connected with that of others, we may discard our old aim securely, and take up this, as answering the very purpose driven at by the former; keeping our eye constantly upon it as a mark to direct us in all our proceedings.

3. For if the accounts of all are to be set even, we can get nothing by obtaining a little advantage at the expence of greater damage to another; and lose nothing by submitting to some pain for procuring him a greater pleasure. Because in the former case we depress his balance more than we raise our own, and thereby cut ourselves off from so much of the expectations we were entitled to by the rule of equality as the difference amounts to: in the latter we raise his balance more than we depress our own, and thereby encrease our future expectations in like proportion. For so if there be two merchants in partnership, each of them during the course of trade, would think himself interested in the balance appearing from time to time upon the others books: and would judge it prudent to throw any branch of trade into the others hands, if

it would turn to greater profit there than in his own. Nor would it alter his measures, that his partner had a larger balance of cash in hand already; for while he could supply himself by his own industry, he would choose to do it that way rather than draw out of what lay elsewhere in reserve for his future occasions.

Now tis the rule of equality, entituling each adventurer to a share in the whole profits of the business, that constitutes a partnership; whether imposed by the authority of a superior or settled by mutual compact. For if a merchant sends his sons with a competent stock to trade in different parts of the globe, upon condition that when they return home, the gains of all shall be divided equally among them; this is a partnership as much as if they had entred into it by voluntary agreement: and the King's frigates, ordered out upon a joint cruize, are as much partners as a company of privateers.

Therefore the universe may be justly regarded as an innumerable host of partners, dealing together in the traffic of happiness: and it is our business to apply all our contrivance and industry towards improving the common stock, and adding to the quantity of enjoyments in nature wherever we can. 'Tis no matter whether we do this in the hands of
another

another or of ourselves, we shall advance our own benefit either way alike ; because our share or interest must always rise and fall proportionably with that of the public. But there are disbursements to be made in all traffic : labour, trouble, danger, disappointment, self-denial, pain and punishment, are the disbursements necessary in the commerce of nature : and the prudent merchant will grudge no expence likely to yield a larger return. Only he will manage parcimoniously, driving his bargains hard, that the cost may not run higher than the occasion absolutely requires : nor yet will he scruple to advance any sums because the returns may fall into other hands, for the common stock will be the object he has constantly at heart, as knowing himself so much the richer man as that can be made to encrease.

4. Thus the general good becomes the root whereout all our schemes and contrivances, all our rules of conduct and sentiments of honour are to branch : and the centre whereto all our particular lines of direction are to point. But this general good, although much in men's mouths, seems but little understood, being supposed always to imply something redounding to the benefit of the whole community : whereas we are too inconsiderable to do any good whereof the universe may partake. Ne-

vertheless let it be remembered that the whole is made up of individuals ; so that every pleasure we do our neighbour, is an addition to the quantity of happiness in nature. Just as a merchant, sending goods to one partner, which may be disposed of to great advantage, thereby enlarges the common stock although the rest of the company should know nothing of the matter. Therefore whatever good we do to any particular creature, we do to the universe : agreeably to that expression of him who represented a community as their head, What ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done unto me.

But though universal good be promoted by the good of any single person, yet it is more promoted by what redounds to the benefit of numbers ; which therefore deserves the preference whenever opportunity serves or the two come into competition : and this is so evident that nobody can doubt of it. Hence the mighty bustle commonly made with public spirit, which as bandied about in the world is become an empty sound with nothing of spirit in it ; or used as a pretence to varnish over selfish designs ; or employed as an artifice to bring others into a disinterested zeal, which those who recommend it laugh at in their sleeve as a weakness. But if such as have abilities would set themselves in earnest to
trace

trace the relation between self-interest and general through the channels of nature and Providence, in the manner I have attempted, they might perhaps clear the passage more demonstratively: and by their greater sagacity and skill in casting light upon objects, might render the connection visible to common apprehensions, so as to make them intimately persuaded of its reality, and embrace it as a practical principle of action. Nevertheless, to take off from their trouble as much as I can, since men are remarkably ingenious at starting objections against the best evidenced truths they do not like, I shall endeavour to obviate such as I apprehend may arise against this rule now laid down as the most prudential.

5. It may be alledged that the quantity of good and evil in nature is such and none other than God in his wisdom and bounty has thought proper to make it: and consequently the portion of each individual must be such precisely as falls to his share, according to the number of creatures existent, beyond the power of anything to alter it. Therefore it matters not what good or hurt they bring upon their neighbour, because they cannot diminish the portion of either allotted to him, they can only anticipate the times of his receiving it: for if they do the former, he has so much less

to expect ; if the latter, so much less to fear, in the remainder of his period.

Now this allegation might have some colour of reason, if we knew the precise portion assigned to each creature, or if it were to be ascertained by an unalterable fatality : but we know not the one, and know the other, from our experience, not to be the case. So that whenever we do good, we see the immediate benefit of it ; but we cannot see, nor rationally conclude, that some remote loss or damage shall ensue from it. And with respect to the portion, the whole measure of that is secured no otherwise than the several articles composing it, and the times of their being given ; that is, not by a fatality, but by a provision of adequate causes. Let but men turn the tables, and they will see the hollowness of their excuse : for if another goes to hurt them or debar them from taking the pleasures in their power, they will not bear to be told, it is only an anticipation or retardment of what they must receive some time or other. And in gratifications of desire or self-interest, they will not hear of a fatality : whereas in reality these matters are as much under appointment by the provision of causes as anything else whatever. Therefore let them only raise their desire to its proper object, to wit, the advancement of good
wherever

wherever feasible, and their objection will vanish of itself. I have endeavoured to make appear in the last Chapter but one, that the secret Will of God can be no guide to our conduct, which we are to form upon the declared Will, evidenced to us by our reason judging upon the consequences of measures, or by rules built upon our former experience or upon the authority of those who know the tendency of actions better than ourselves: therefore we have nothing to do with appointments any further than as manifested to our apprehension. For the decree or determination of God is nothing else than the provision of causes adapted to each particular event; and the operation of those causes is requisite to execute the decree: but in matters within our power, our own deliberation and industry are among those causes; wherefore we must think and strive for ourselves notwithstanding the decree.

This is apparent in common affairs of life: for who that lives in plenty does not see that he has his daily bread appointed him by having the means in his hands of procuring it, for which he ought to be thankfull? yet does not see at the same time that this appointment by no means supercedes his cares in sending to market and ordering his family? Thus although the portion of
happiness

happiness be of divine appointment, yet the application of our cares and industry, for conveying the parts of it administered by our own agency, is requisite and advisable. In these instances the Will of God is done by our Will: but that Will orders all things for the best. Yet though whatever we shall do must therefore be agreeable to his Will, and best to be done, because done: still this does not take away the use of judgement and deliberation to direct our choice between the several measures of conduct. If a man having it in his power to do something whereby he should get a thousand pounds seven years hence, should be told that whether he did it or let it alone, either way would be the best he could take: I make no doubt he would prefer that which afforded him a visible gain, rather than depend upon the unknown profit to arise from his rejecting it. So if, however we conduct ourselves, we shall unerringly pursue that unknown Best appointed by divine provision, it behoves us take the way apparently best to our own judgement.

But men never employ these sophisms unless in justification of their gratifying some present fancy; whereas if they had any weight, they must avail against inclination as well as judgement, the omission of either being alike the best thing could have been done,

done, whenever done: so that all choice and preference of any kind whatever will be taken away, and a total stagnation of activity ensue. But if between things equal in themselves, liking and fancy may cast the balance, surely the weights of reason and prudence are greater. Yet we cannot allow them intrinsically equal, for our fortunes in futurity, as well as present time, are in great measure of our own making: therefore if we hurt them by misconduct, what remains will be the quantity thought best to be allotted us by divine wisdom; and if we improve them, the quantity so encreased will likewise be that thought best by the same wisdom. Thus the Best we may attain by the road of virtue and discretion, will be (if I may so speak) a better Best, than any we can arrive at thro' the paths of folly and indulgence.

6. Another handle may be taken for cavilling, from our having laid down that every evil is to be considered as the payment for a purchase of something more valuable: from whence it may be inferred that by plaguing and hurting another, we do him no injury, for we only compell him thereby to make an advantageous purchase. Or if the value of the estate and the price be settled by divine appointment, we only call upon him for a part of his payment, which it is all one whether he make to day or to morrow, since he must have made it some time or other.

But

But this may be answered in the same manner with the former; for we know not either the certain value of the estate or the price, nor whether one shall be enhanced in proportion to the other: therefore by doing hurt we visibly encrease the payment, without knowing whether we shall encrease the purchase.

Besides, by this rule it would be incumbent upon every man to make himself as miserable as possible, because by so doing he would purchase a larger fund of happiness: but I believe no man in his sober senses and dispassionate moods, ever run himself willfully into miseries upon this account; nor unless called thereto by some rule of duty, which was a particular assurance that the sufferings he submitted to were worth his while to undergo. We know not what proportion of evil is necessary for the services of the universe, therefore ought to use all means in our power for lessening it, being well assured that we cannot reduce it lower than the sum imposed for the necessary services. The public taxes are a payment for the protection afforded by the state: yet he that should compel his neighbour to pay a shilling in the pound more than the law demands, or than he knows the exigencies of the state require, would be deemed to do an injury. So he who
puts

puts another to a pain or trouble from whence he sees not the benefit resulting, does him a wrong; by exacting a payment he cannot be assured would ever have been demanded.

7. But the most plausible exception lying against the expedience of labouring for the general good, arises from our inability to contribute so much towards it as to make our share worth the consideration. For it may be urged, if you had it in your power to do something that would make a thousand people happy for fifty years together: though this would seem a vast addition to the common stock of enjoyment, yet when you reflect what prodigious multitudes it is to be divided amongst, your own part will scarce amount to the value of once smelling at a rose. So there is no inducement to bestir yourself, because with your utmost endeavours you cannot make an addition to your own fortune sufficient to be perceived.

But let us consider, that if this doctrine were to prevail, most of the blessings of nature, the benefits of society and conveniences of life, would be lost: the most valuable of which are procured by the operation of feeble inconsiderable agents. The Planets are holden in their orbits by the attraction of minute particles, undiscernible with a microscope, composing the body of the Sun: the earth is
cloathed

cloathed with pasture by little feeds, each whereof cannot throw up herbage enough to make a bite for a sheep: if we admit a Mundane Soul, the worlds are formed and the courses of nature kept in order, by spirits which singly could not heave a mote in the Sun beams. What is a single soldier in those armies that have kept the mightiest potentates in awe? If he lag behind you do not stop for him, or if he be slain you do not miss him. What is a private person's quota to those immense supplies supporting our armaments in all quarters of the globe? If he has not wherewithal to pay, the operations go on as before, and none but the collector or his nearest neighbours know anything of his failure. Yet a wiseman, finding himself to have courage and ability for the service, would not desert in time of battle although there were no courts martial to overawe him: nor withhold his proportion of the taxes although his goods were liable to no distress. For he would regard what he contributes by his person or his pocket as entitling him to a share of the advantages procured by all the others he joins with: an object well worth his contemplation. Nor let it be made a discouragement that some unreasonable creatures refuse their helping hand: for there are now concurring some way or other in the public service

service to render the benefits worked out by them a sufficient inducement to become one of their number.

8. But we need not undervalue our particular services because they yield but little profit : for though the performance of them cannot do much good, yet it may prevent great mischiefs which might have ensued upon the omission. The negligence of a single sentinel may give the enemy an opportunity of surprizing a whole camp : and a little carelessness in placing a candle may produce a fire that shall burn down a whole town. Therefore we can never be too vigilant, because we can never know what waste of destruction may ensue upon the want of it. What though our persons be single and our efforts small, nobody can say what multitudes they may not affect, nor what tides of industry they may not excite. 'Tis notorious of how spreading a nature both the virtues and the vices are : for example and sympathy diffuse the stream to all quarters from a single fountain : and a man may sometimes find that in his power wherein all mankind shall have concern in the consequences. Noah built his ark to save his little family consisting of eight persons : but in so doing he saved all the generations of men that have since overspread the earth. The founders of Religion and sects
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in philosophy, inventors of arts and sciences, though imparting their thoughts to a few, have thereby opened channels which overflowed whole nations and countries. And as we know not how far the people of the intermediate state stand affected by what passes here, nor what effect their transactions have upon the spiritual substance ; it is not impossible nor improbable, that a single person may do that which shall be felt by the whole universe.

It may be said this might happen perhaps to extraordinary persons once in an age, but a private man never stands in a situation to work consequences that can possibly extend beyond the narrow circle of his acquaintance. But I would ask him how he knows that ? For we have shown in our Chapter on Providence, that the affairs of the world are all complicated and interwoven among one another into one tissue : that the greatest events depend upon the minutest, and the constitution of the Roman empire, together with that of the kingdoms branched out from thence, might be determined by some such inconsiderable circumstance as the wearing a particular coloured ribbon upon a certain festival. So that there is no such thing as trifle in nature, every little incident and sudden fancy being provided for by perfect wisdom with

a regard to the whole. For how narrow soever the views of creatures may be, God beholds the universe, and directs every little stroke in his all-comprehensive plan, so as to contribute its share towards the general good. Or if there be such things as trifles, they are so intermingled among the imperceptible springs of important events, that the most prying eye cannot distinguish them apart.

Therefore we ought always to stand upon our guard and shape our minute motions by such discretion and regard to rectitude as is proper upon the occasion, for the chance of effecting what unseen good or escaping what unthought of evil may possibly depend upon them. For the chain of causes and effects runs to such immeasurable lengths and divides into so many unperceivable threads, that no man can be sure his manner of stirring the fire or buttoning his coat, shall not be attended with consequences greater than he is aware of. But it would be in vain to take his measures upon consequences that human sagacity cannot investigate: therefore he has nothing to do with them, nor with anything else besides the rules of prudence, charity, propriety and innocence, so far as in the present circumstances of the case he can discern them. For since the

wisest men have always maintained that moral good is the ready road to natural, while he follows the best lights of his judgment, he may trust Providence for leading him unknowingly into all those secret advantages possible in his situation to be attained. For though God no doubt has appointed each of us his certain portion, yet he deals out to us, perhaps the whole or at least a great part of it, by our own or one another's hands. For we have seen more than once before, that things certain may nevertheless depend upon human contrivance and industry. Therefore it behoves us to use the proper degree of circumspection as well in matters of trifle as of moment: because according to our conduct in either, our portion will be better or worse; and that in a measure greater than we think of, and large enough to deserve our notice and overpay the trouble of the acquisition.

9. Yet even supposing this was not the case, but that it were impossible for us, either directly or in consequence, to add so largely to the general fund as may raise the least perceivable difference in each private share; still there would not want encouragement to bestir ourselves: for it is not necessary that every particular profit must be divided among the whole company, because
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the members may have equal shares though assigned them out of different funds. Were there a million of traders dispersed up and down in different quarters and destined to make the same fortunes, they might be divided into distinct partnerships of ten in a company; who might traffic and settle their balances from time to time among themselves, without intercourse among the other decads. Equality might still be preserved, provided there were an able superintendant of the whole, who should take care there were the like opportunities of trade among the several decads, or that particular persons were removed in due order from a less to a more gainfull fellowship. And in fact we find the creation, so far as our experience reaches, divided into distinct species and limited societies; the effects of whose actions extend no further than to a certain number of those with whom they have intercourse. Nor can we presume otherwise of those unseen consequences depending upon the secret concatenation of causes, which however they may in part extend to innumerable multitudes, are likely to affect some particular class of Beings principally, with whom we stand nearest concerned. And upon removal into a new fellowship, the rule of equality will require that the place assigned us should

be such as may secure to us the balance due upon our former account. For though these changes be brought about by natural causes, yet God, being the Author and disposer of nature, establishes all her provisions in equity; as well those respecting the changes from one state into another, as those regulating accounts in the same. So that by our diligence in the branch of trade before us, we determine what interest we shall have in the branches to be allotted us hereafter. Thus in every stage of Being, the main of what profits we can make will accrue to the benefit of such a competent number as that our proportion shall remain weighty enough to be felt in our hands.

Or even if we suppose all the gains accruing thrown into the general fund upon account of the whole partnership, there is no necessity they should be drawn out again by little fractions from each, so minute as to reduce them below our notice. Could a man raise a profit of a thousand pounds to receive it again by a farthing a year, he might despise the addition of a farthing to his annual income: but if it came by fifties or hundreds of pounds at a time, he would find the convenience of them for his occasions. So the share of happiness we earn by some effort of our industry, being dealt out to us in serviceable portions,

portions, will answer our future wants some time or other, without detriment to our fellow creatures receiving theirs in like manner. This would evidently be the case upon admitting a universal rotation: for then every person falling in some part of his course into the place of every other, must receive the very same good, both in kind and quantity, as he does to his neighbour; and if he can do that which redounds to many, he will reap the benefit of it so many times as there are persons to whom he has done service. But should there be no such exact retaliation in kind, yet equity requiring that the good befalling one should likewise befall another, there must be a compensation equal in value. Therefore though we do not receive just the same sized notes or the same species of coin we carried in; we shall be sure of receiving the full amount in good negotiable cash.

So that since the allegory of books has been employed by the best authorities, we may consider the provisions of heaven as a universal Bank, wherein accounts are regularly kept, and every man debited or credited for the least farthing he takes out or brings in. All the good we procure to another, the labour and self-denial we go through prudently, and evil we suffer unavoidably, are written down

as articles in our favour ; all the evil we do, the fond indulgencies we give into, or good we receive, entered per Contra as so much drawn out of our cash. Perhaps something may be taken out for the public services, but then we have the benefit of this in the public conveniences and protection whereof we partake : but the remainder lies placed to each private account for answering our calls or supplying our occasions.

And this is a better Bank than that of England to keep our current cash ; I shall not say, for its greater security, because the monied men of this and foreign nations think the other secure enough : but the Bank of England give no interest upon their notes, whereas the Bank of the Universe improve what we have lying there to immense advantage, far beyond what could be made in Script by any Jew or clerk in the secretary office let into secrets ; and the application to our several occasions lies under wiser management than our own. If I have an account with the Bank of England and should take it into my head, because other folks are fond of the like, to throw away a large sum in punch and ale for gaining me the huzzas of a drunken mob and procuring me an opportunity of serving my country which I want abilities to use ; or to buy a horse of noble lineage descended
from

from Turkish or Barbarian ancestors to run at Newmarket: upon applying to the cashier in Thread-needle street for a thousand pounds, he will instantly order payment without asking questions: though I may want the money grievously next year to make up a portion for my Serena or my Sparkler. Or should I chance on some distant journey to be reduced low in pocket, if I have no check'd paper along with me, I cannot draw for a single fixpence to buy me a little bread and cheese.

But the directors of the bank above have constant intelligence from all parts of the universe, and their runners traversing to and fro among their customers: so that whatever I have belonging to me there, if I call for a sum to squander away upon some vice or folly, though I beg and pray never so hard, the cashier will not issue me a farthing, because he knows it had better be kept in reserve for more necessary occasions. But if I chance to fall into distress in any disconsolate spot of nature, where a supply would do me real service: though I should not see the danger of my situation, nor have sent advice with the needful per post, I shall have the runner angel privately slip the proper sum into my hand at a time when I least expect it. So we have no need to trouble ourselves about the improvement of our money there, or the laying it out for

our particular uses : tis our business to use all our judgement and industry and vigilance for throwing as much as we can continually into bank. Yet this does not hinder us from taking present enjoyments from time to time, where innocent and lying properly within our reach ; for tho' this be a lessening of our future demands, yet the future were of no avail if it were never to be present ; nor is money good for any thing to be spent, provided it be spent prudently and no more given for things than they are worth.

10. Nor have we concern only with the articles of our own account, but with those likewise of other persons : from whence we may receive a pleasure not to be found in the ordinary course of worldly commerce. If on attending at the earthly accountant office, the eye, while the clerks turn over the leaves of their books, happens to catch upon somebody else's balance which appears ten times larger than our own, one may be mortified to find oneself so inconsiderable in point of riches, compared with him.

But in the accounts of Providence a like discovery could prove no such mortification : for we dealing all in partnership, the profits whereof are to be made equal to each in some shape or other in some part of our period, whatever virtues, talents or successes we see
elsewhere

elsewhere, adding more largely to the common stock than we can do ourselves, must become matter of rejoicing rather than vexation. Because the rule of equality ensures to us that we shall either immediately partake of the fruits gathered therefrom, or at some future time be instated in a branch of trade we see to be more profitable than that now under our management.

And this consideration duly attended to, must put an end to that humour of depreciating the characters, the abilities and the enjoyments of other creatures, so generally prevailing among mankind. For as the more good, so the less evil we can find in others the better it is for ourselves. For my part I am so far from any temptation to believe myself the happiest of my species, that I would thank anybody who should prove me the most miserable creature in the universe: I do not mean, who should bring mischief upon me or discover misfortunes in store which I do not know of, for this would be madness to desire; but should show the condition I now stand in, such as it is, inferiour to that of every other Being: so that the common labourer, the galley slave, the negro, the flea, the mite and every departed soul, possessed greater enjoyments than those within my reach. Such a discovery would afford me
a most

a most ravishing prospect of nature, and without hurting me in present, give me more hopefull expectations for the future: for since I am not always to continue in the same state, I could make no change unless for the better.

But I am too sensible of the blessings vouchsafed me, to be persuaded into this imagination: on the contrary, when I behold miseries anywhere appearing far greater than anything I ever underwent, which yet I have found troublesome enough; it raises, besides a fellow feeling for the sufferer, a melancholy reflection to think that the lot of existence is subjected to so severe a condition. However, my partiality to wish it easier makes me ready to embrace every evidence that offers for believing it so: and it is with pleasure I find alleviations, from custom, difference of apprehension or insensibility, for every natural evil; and extenuations, from ignorance, inadvertency and surprize, for every moral. Or if this cannot be done, find benefits resulting therefrom; enjoyments and advantages compensating them.

Thus the doctrine of equality tends directly to nourish benevolence, mutual esteem, good wishes and favourable judgments, between fellow creatures: and how-much soever it may appear at first sight to encourage

encourage indolence by making men trust to the diligence of their partners, yet when fairly examined, it proves as strong a recommendation and solid ground of care and industry in particular persons, as any principle whatever. Therefore those who should not admit it, might yet allow it excuse, for sake of the desirable ends aimed at by proposing it to their consideration.

C H A P. XXIX.

D I V I N E J U S T I C E.

THE attentive Reader will please to remember that at the close of my Chapters upon the Attributes, I took notice of some others usually placed upon the list, which I there called secondary Attributes, as not arising from contemplation of the divine nature regarded apart: whereof this of justice was one, which I could not take fully into consideration until I had collected further materials necessary for the purpose. He will now see why I postponed this article, to wit, that I might first go through what observations I had to make upon the manner of God's governing his creatures, whereof the proper distribution of rewards and punishments is one of the engines employed.

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We have no means of forming any conceptions of the moral Attributes, unless by analogy with something we have observed among ourselves: and it has been found at several times in the course of these enquiries, that a wiseman would never punish for punishing sake; nor unless driven into it by the necessity of attaining some greater good which could not be procured without it. For true wisdom always includes goodness, and goodness will never put a man upon any measure that is not beneficial: it may urge him sometimes to hurt another for preventing greater mischief or reaping good fruits that will overpay the hurt; as in cases of medicine or surgery or forcing a child into the discipline of a school or drudgeries of an apprenticeship; but wherever it takes the road of severity, there is always some benefit lying in prospect beyond.

Now we have shown in the proper place, that the motive of action is that end occurring to view at the time of acting: the intermediate steps have no weight in the scale, being only ideal causes directing us how to proceed. Therefore whenever the suffering of an offender is the real motive or sole object in contemplation, it proceeds from passion, ill-nature or weakness. Not but that the best men often punish without

out looking to the good fruits resulting therefrom: but then they do it in compliance with their rules of justice, which are to them an evidence of good they cannot discern. For human reason is so short sighted as seldom to see to the end of her road, therefore we should lose our way perpetually, if we had not rules to direct us, and though our rules branch and receive evidence from one another yet tis the expedience of following rules that gives them their sanction and begets the general idea of rectitude. For what else is Right unless that which had better be done than let alone? and what can we understand by Better unless more beneficial and more productive of good?

But when we turn our thoughts upon the divine nature, we shall find nothing of passion or malice or weakness there: nor are the views of God so narrow as to want those helps to direct him in the course of his proceeding, which are necessary to weak sighted mortals. For he sees the whole immensity of space and shoreless ocean of eternity in one unbounded prospect: he discerns distinctly the fullest length of chain and most complicated tissue of causes requisite to compleat his every purpose: nor follows other rule in taking measures for conferring what blessings he judges proper

proper for his creatures, than his own gracious bounty and the constitution of universal nature he established from everlasting. Therefore we have no reason to believe he ever terminates his views upon evil, or has nothing further in his thought, when he takes vengeance, than the sufferings of the sinner.

2. Were there an immediate and necessary connection between offence and punishment, there could be no place for mercy; much less could the exercise of it deserve commendation, but must rather be deemed an erroneous and unnatural proceeding. Yet we find, that in the judgement of the wisest, an aptness to show mercy and to forgive or forget injuries, is always regarded as one of the brightest jewels in a man's character: which shows there is some medium making the connection, which when wanting in the circumstances of the case, mercy may laudably interpose. And this medium can be none other than the necessity or expedience of punishing; in order to prevent the mischiefs expectant upon future enormities. Therefore it is that repentance sheaths the sword of justice, which it could not do if demerit was essential to transgression; because nothing subsequent can alter the quality or essence of a deed already perpetrated: but the thorough amendment of the party, preventing his ever offending again, renders

renders punishment needless, by answering the purpose intended thereby, and so removing the medium of necessity, destroys the connection. Therefore when punishment is necessary for example to others, repentance will not be accepted: because there the medium consisting of many strings, though one be cut asunder, the rest remain entire, to shut out the entrance of mercy.

Nor can we conceive the matter beholden otherwise by the all-seeing eye of God, with whom is mercy as well as judgement: but if in his original constitution of nature, he had established an immediate and essential connection between offence and punishment, we cannot suppose he would ever have broken through his own constitutions. Yet Mercy has always been counted his favourite Attribute: and when in condescension to our weakness, he has been represented by figures taken from human sentiments, we find him described as being uneasy and anxious to have the sinner escape. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he should turn from his evil ways and live. But neither God nor man can be supposed to submit to a thing they have no pleasure in, unless for some greater benefit to redound therefrom: and in such case act upon a motive of necessity.

But

But necessity, when operating as a motive, always weighs by the idea of advantage, which the thing we do is necessary to attain, and which renders it more beneficial to be done than omitted. Therefore since God is no respecter of persons, nor consequently entertains a personal hatred or grudging against any one, but his mercy is over all his works and he would not that any should perish: we may rationally conclude, that whenever he executes vengeance, he does it not in wrath, but in wisdom, as a means to work out some good that shall overbalance the sufferings of the delinquent. For his mercy never sleeps, but would always interpose whenever justice goes to lift the thunder, unless goodness and wisdom did sometimes withhold her, by showing the greater profit redounding from punishment. Which profit equity enters in her books of account, apportioning to the sinner his share of whatever is earned by his sufferings. For God orders all things for the best, whereby must be meant, not the best for himself, because he wants nothing from us, nor can his riches or happiness receive addition by anything passing among us, but the best for his creatures: whose interests we have already seen are so involved together, that whatever promotes the general good of the Universe or of any community comprehended

hended therein, must promote that of every particular.

3. Thus punishment follows the rule directing all other evil, which our idea of infinite goodness may convince us, always terminates in some event more desirable than the escaping it. It will not be amiss in the next place to trace the origin of vengeance, which we shall not find arising immediately from the divine nature, as goodness and equity do, but from the constitution of the creatures, rendering it a necessary spring in the hand of Providence for working out its gracious purposes and securing the accomplishment of its plan. We know by experience that God has been pleased to intermingle a portion of evil among his works, and this may be distinguished into three kinds: first labour, self-denial and inconveniences, we are instructed to submit to voluntarily for the good fruits to be gathered from them, or by rules established by others upon the knowledge of their expedience; next, diseases, sinister accidents and infirmities of old age, brought upon us by the courses of nature or fortune; and thirdly, punishment inflicted by the act of some superiour power, to drive us into a tenour of conduct we should not have pursued without.

I know some have holden all the trouble, laboriousness and disasters of life, to be conditions annexed to human nature, in consequence of offences committed in a former state: but if so, they fall within our definition of punishment above given, for though they cannot have the proper effect here, they may make us examples to some other Beings, or to ourselves in some future state, wherein we may have faculties given to discern the causes of them. Yet we cannot regard them as such now, because we cannot know for what misbehaviour they are inflicted; and therefore they can be no warning to us what practices to avoid. I know likewise that man too often punishes the fellow creatures in his power, for disobedience of his commands given without any regard to their benefit, but solely for his own advantage or humour. As when the lordly West-indian tortures his poor Negroes for not doing more than they could do in cultivating his plantations: whose produce he never means to share among his slaves, but sends it all to market to raise wealth for supplying his own wanton and wasteful luxury. But God, as we observed before, has no advantage of his own, nor humour, to consult: so can give his commands for none other end than the advantage and happiness of his creatures, nor punish upon
other

other motive than to enforce obedience to those commands, and thereby secure the benefits consequent thereupon.

4. Therefore the divine commands may be regarded as the advices of an indulgent tender parent or unerring monitor, instead of the injunctions of an Almighty Governour: and must operate as strongly in one light as the other upon a prudent man, having an earnest attachment to his own interest. If I had never heard of the Decalogue, nor had other rule to go by beside that left with the Reader at the end of my first Volume, of taking care of myself whenever reduced to a condition wherein I could not be the better for any good befalling others; yet suppose an Angel were sent from Heaven to stand before me, with authentic and undoubted credentials of his mission, and delivered his message in the following tenour.

Thus saith the Lord Almighty, the Creator and Governour of all things visible and invisible. Behold I have given thee powers of action, to do this or that as thou pleatest: I have given thee freedom of Will, to choose between the things before thee: and I have given thee desire, to quicken thee up to activity, that thou lose not the use of thy powers. What hast thou now to do, but to fulfill thy heart's desire in any way whereto thou canst

turn thy hand ? For I have bound thee by no law, nor hung any restriction over thee, which might withhold thee from doing the thing that is in thy mind. Because I am mild and gracious, and my mercy endureth for ever : neither is there wrath or vengeance before me. Am I a man, that I should suffer passion ? or the son of man, that I should resent or be angry ? Can injury approach me, that I should be vexed : or damage be done me that I should retaliate ? Therefore fear not my terrors, for there are none with me : nor my judgements, for I do not execute them. For I delight to do good, and not evil. My beloved office which I have chosen for myself is to guide, not to rule ; to admonish, not to punish.

I behold the present, and future : the issues of events are before me : and I alone know unerringly what is good. Have not I the Lord created the heavens and the earth ? Are they not interwoven together in one universal tissue, connecting all natures, visible and invisible, by one indissoluble chain of causes and effects ? But have I done more work than mine eye can survey ? are there any limits to mine intelligence : or any line in my plan so minute as to escape me ? Do not I then know the means of gratifying the desire of happiness implanted in my creatures, and all the
turnings

turnings in the road of expedience: or want I loving kindness and bowels of compassion, to lead them thereinto by proper directions, according to their several natures? To man I have given reason and forecast, to discern the things at a distance, and guide him into the way that leadeth to his peace. And if I have not bestowed these in sufficient measure to answer all his occasions, I will vouchsafe him other lights to supply the deficiency, that nothing needful be withholden from him. For this cause have I sent my messenger to declare unto thee what thou wast not able to discern by thine own sagacity. Harken unto his admonition, for I have put into his mouth the words of wisdom and truth.

Know then, that if thou shalt worship Chance, or Necessity, an uncreated Nature, or any other God besides me.

If thou shalt rest thy dependence upon anything in the visible heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or that cometh forth from the bowels of the earth.

If thou shalt cast aside thy reverence of my Majesty, or swear 'by my name to the thing that is not, or use it lightly until it become an empty sound in thy mouth.

If thou shalt lay out thy whole time upon thy worldly concerns, thy pleasures and thy fancies: or trusting to the strength of thy rea-

son, shalt neglect those expedients necessary for preserving alive the remembrance of me in thine imagination.

If thou shalt withhold due honour from thy superiors whom I have set over thee, whether of thy house or of thy people to preserve order and œconomy therein.

If thou shalt destroy or hurt thy brother without lawful warrant.

If thou shalt indulge the lusts of thy flesh, which thou sharest in common with the beasts.

If thou shalt purloin thy neighbours goods, or overreach him when ye commune together in your dealings.

If thou shalt charge him falsely with that for which the judge will give sentence, or asperse his character in the streets, or calumniate him in secret.

If thou shalt harbour a desire of getting away from him his possessions, or his reputation, or the thing wherein he delighteth, or whatsoever is valuable unto him.

Know that in so doing thou actest foolishly, for by all these things thou wilt lose far greater enjoyment than thou canst gain for the present, and bring down intolerable mischiefs upon thy head : which shall afflict thee sorely, and make thy heart sicken with desire to be delivered from them, but in vain ; for thy desire
fire

fire shall no where find gratification. Because the order of nature is so established, and the chains of connection between thy present and thy future state so carried on, that the issue will surely fall out as I have forewarned thee.

See now, I have set good and evil before thee this day: choose therefore whether of the twaine liketh thee best. Nor murmur against me as a hard master: for I set thee no task, lay thee under no commands, nor turn thee from the path thou wouldest go by my threatenings: but leave thee to thine own judgement and prudence, to conduct thee into the course they shall represent to thee the most desirable.

Now upon supposition of such a declaration coming from the fountain of knowledge and truth, I appeal to any man of common sense, and the least forethought of anything beyond the present moment, whether it would not be as incumbent upon me to follow the admonition, as if I had seen a visible appearance descending upon mount Sinai, surrounded with thunders and lightnings and ineffable glories, engraving the same with a finger upon two tables of stone, and subjoining a denunciation underneath, The soul that keepeth not all the words of this writing shall surely be cut off. So there needs no more than to enlighten our understandings, that we might discern the

natural consequences of our actions, to make the paths of righteousness eligible: for we should see her so closely embraced by prudence and interest, that we could not know which was which: nor would any other road be the right, were there no future judgement, than that we are driven into by the terrors of it.

5. Nevertheless I should be very averse against persuading mankind, if I could do it, into a belief that such a message had ever been really delivered: and very sorry to have such a delusion gain credit upon myself. For tho' it would make no alteration in what is right, nor render other measures expedient to be pursued than are so already: yet I fear it would make a fatal alteration in our conduct. For how much soever we may fancy ourselves guided by reason and prudence, 'tis too notorious by every day's experience, that they have not strength enough to influence our actions. Mr. Locke, altho', misled at first by the notion prevailing among learned men, yet discovered upon second thoughts, and proved demonstrably by many instances drawn from common life, that good, the greater good, acknowledged and apprehended to be such, does not determine the Will: which constantly follows satisfaction upon whatever object appearing in the thought. For while
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the mind can satisfy herself compleatly with a present pleasure, she never stirs a step towards the attainment of distant good ; nor unless she apprehends a present uneasiness would accompany the missing her opportunity. But it is the resting of satisfaction upon an object, that makes it our desire, or raises an appetite towards it, and renders it an aim of our pursuit.

Therefore our desires and appetites are the officers having the leading of our powers, nor can reason do any thing unless by their ministry : her office being only to put such of them into command as will do their duty well. The virtues have no avail upon us while remaining in theory, nor become practical until grown into appetites : so derive their very name and essence from being incorporated into that family. Therefore the bare knowledge of what makes for our happiness would help us but little forward towards it, unless there was a desire which should afford us an immediate satisfaction or uneasiness, according as we found ourselves in the way. But the general idea of good is of too thin and abstracted a nature to catch hold on desire, without a view of some particular good, similar to those we have experienced, and a clear exposition of the manner or chain of consequences, whereby our conduct should produce

produce it. For tho' the love of rectitude for itself has been cried up as capable of every thing, and perhaps justly supposing the attainment of it were feasible, it has never yet been found among the sons of men. But should the particular benefits resulting from our good works be manifested, and the manner of their growing from thence ever so clearly explained, still we might find them so remote as that the prospect would be too hazy to excite our desire. For were it to accrue by rotation, casting every man at some time or other into the places of those to whom he does service, he might not think it worth his while to concern himself with what shall happen millions of millions of years hence. Or which is more probable, we might find them dependent upon the joint endeavours of such innumerable multitudes that our own would appear not to deserve the pains of applying them. For if the principal branches of the general good be worked out by the concurrence of all the creatures, contributing thereto in their several stations, we might think our share of the contribution could never be missed, and our own loss upon withholding it too small to be perceived.

6. Since then we are so constituted as that good, not clearly apprehended, or lying at a distance very remote from us, or requiring
vast

vast numbers to concur in procuring it, does not influence us to action: there needs something more prevalent to be annexed for giving it activity and vigour. And this we cannot doubt but God has provided in his constitutions of nature: for he establishes them in wisdom, and adapts his causes respectively to the subjects whereon they are to operate. To matter he has given the capacity of impulse and necessary agency, directed by such well policied laws, as that every atom performs its office in carrying on the stupendous courses of nature, and preparing for events to fall out many ages to come: to brutes he has given appetites and instinct, guiding them to do all the little services required at their hands: to man he has given freedom of Will, determined by motives urging him to the choice of such actions within his narrow sphere of power, as conduce most effectually to the general good of the creation. But since he has not afforded him understanding large enough to discern this good, and the way by which he contributes towards it; nor sensibility to be touched with objects removed to a great distance; nor penetration to see the value of small powers in conjunction with those of other agents: he has supplied the deficiency by providing other incitements to turn his steps into the way that full intelligence

gence and unflackning prudence would have led. Whereof this of punishment is one, which drives him into measures whose good fruits he does not know, creates an expedience nearer to his view, and holds up an object strong enough to engage his desire.

Nor do we want experience enough to teach us the use of this engine in our dealings with one another: I do not mean only by that lash of punishment which the law holds over villains for the peace and security of honest men, but in those few instances wherein we imitate our heavenly Father, by exercising our government for the benefit of those under our power. We bring children, by threatening them with the rod, into those little arts of managing their limbs, and into the rudiments of learning, whose necessary uses they are not sensible of. We keep young lads, by restrictions and penalties, from idleness, excesses and indulgencies, whose pernicious consequences, tho' not ignorant of, they are not touched with. And when an army or a naval armament is sent out upon some enterprize, the whole plunder whereof is to be divided among them: yet there are courts martial binding each man to his duty, which otherwise he would think might be spared, for that the work would go on as well without him.

7. Hence

7. Hence we see the origin of vengeance, when found in the breast of any wise and beneficent Governour: namely, from the imperfection of understanding, which cannot discover the consequences of every course of behaviour; and from the weakness of reason, which has not colours lively enough to paint a strong representation of distant objects upon imagination, nor force enough to urge desire to the prosecution of advantages she does discern. Thus divine justice springs, not from the nature of God, but of his creatures; and is a branch of wisdom, discerning and providing the proper springs for actuating them in their motions. Therefore we may rest assured that God will take vengeance whenever necessary, and will not take it in greater measure than necessary for the purpose intended thereby.

Hence likewise we may learn the proper idea of punishment, which is that species of evil annexed by the act of a superiour to some kind of behaviour, as a motive to deter from behaving in the like manner for the future. And herein it differs from labour and meer misfortune, which tho' often attendant upon our actions, are not, or ought not to be, a discouragement to our repetition of them. For tho' ill success may justly induce us to alter our conduct, it operates as an information to
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our judgement, not as an adventitious help to assist where it was too weak. Nevertheless this does not hinder, but that the punishment may follow by natural consequence : it will still retain its essence because the work of nature is the work of God : only then we must conceive that God, in so constituting nature as to bring it on, had a view to that particular consequence, without which he would not have comprized it in his original plan.

8. But we may observe, it is not so much actual suffering, as the terror of it, that operates upon freewill, wherefore it is not necessary that punishment should be universal or perpetual : because a severity gone thro' may dwell upon the remembrance of the sufferer, and spread a terror among multitudes, so as to answer the effect wanted upon their minds. In this light of punishment it appears, that the party undergoing it does a signal service to his fellow creatures, by exhibiting to them an example of utmost importance, and necessary to preserve them in happiness : for which service, I see nothing in our ideas of our gracious Governour, that should hinder his making him amends; I do not say reward him, for this would be against reason, because he underwent it not willingly nor for the public good ; but repay him the cost he has been put to compulsorily. If punishment be
necessary,

necessary, offences must needs come, to make that punishment just: and tho' woe be to them by whom they come, yet this woe may be taken into account as an article in the portion of evil thought proper to be allotted them in the length of their period.

We are told it was expedient for manifestation of the divine glory to the Israelites, and thro' them to the other nations upon earth, that Pharaoh and his host should be overwhelmed in the Red sea: for which cause God hardened the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants that they should pursue. Shall then the righteous judge of all the earth exact so rigorous a service without any wages to compensate for the severity of it? Let any man make the case his own, and then answer me, what he would not be ready to hope from the fountain of goodness and righteousness. Nor let him fancy the case could not have been his own: for who caused him to be born lately, instead of three thousand years ago? or cast his lot in England, rather than Egypt? If his father begat a child, had his father the option of what particular Spirit should inhabit the body of his child? Neither let him harbour such an overweening conceit of his own ungiven strength, as to imagine that he should not have acted just as Pharaoh did, if God had
hardened

hardened his heart in like manner. And it is all one whether he apprehends this hardening effected by a supernatural act, or by nature, education and the popish artifices of the magicians: for there is nothing in nature or her productions or the occurrences passing among them, unless by divine appointment or permission.

But if what has been here argued in favour of hardened sinners shall seem to him an encouragement to list himself in the number, let him reflect upon the considerations on that head in the last Chapter: where he will find, that altho' my notion of the compensation should be right, (which I will not ensure him, as never pretending to infallibility) yet does it give no encouragement to run himself upon intolerable sufferings; because at best he will have no more than a bare compensation, nor gain the least tittle of advantage in the bargain over us, who think it deserving our most strenuous and uninterrupted endeavours to escape them.

9. This idea of punishment being a beneficial provision, established for preserving order and good rule in the world, may explain the justice of punishing children for the faults of their parents. For justice being an offspring of wisdom, will always shape her course wherever necessity and expedience lead

lead. But when the parents are dead and gone, their personal punishment, being unseen here, can have no effect upon mankind: therefore if an example be necessary, it must be made upon their descendants. Or if they were known to suffer in their own persons, still the terror is greater, when the mischief spreads to their whole family and dependants. Accordingly the civil laws often confer good and evil upon the children for their father's sake: and nature entails diseases, poverty and impotence, upon the descendants of debauched and vicious ancestors. Nor will it avail to alledge, that this comes to pass by natural consequence, for nature is the work of God: and if in making this provision we will allow him to have had in view the good we see resulting from it, this will bring it under our definition of punishment.

But those who raise this objection conceive of God as punishing in anger: and then indeed it would be an unbecoming thought, to imagine him angry with the innocent for offences committed by the guilty. Therefore one would think our experience, that sometimes he does involve the innocent in his punishments, might convince them that neither anger, nor any intrinsic essence of guilt, is his motive in punishing. Another basis they build their objection upon is, the injury

done to the innocent: but this basis stands upon none other ground than their apprehending him to act occasionally, and that he never thought of punishing the children until roused to vengeance by the wickedness of the father. But surely those who pretend to a larger compass of reason than other people, might comprehend that God, at the formation of a world, may have his whole plan lying distinctly before him, and determine every good or evil event to befall his creatures.

Now whether they hold a pre-existent state, in which case there will be none other evil than that of punishment, they may take for granted that the child deserved what it suffers, by some former misbehaviour. Or whether they believe every birth an original creation, in which case there will be prudential evils, such as hard labour, self-denial, poverty and disaster, sent for some good ends to be produced by them; they may trust the divine wisdom, which often works out many ends by one and the same means, to contrive that the same evil shall prove both prudential and punitory. In either case there is no injury done the child, whose concern lies only with the quantity of evil he undergoes: 'tis no matter of what species it is, or by what channel derived, so long as it is no greater in
measure

measure than was judged proper to be allotted him upon his own account. The Jews crushed under the tower of Siloam felt the same pain and sustained the same damage, as if they had been finners above all other Jews: or as if an Angel had overthrown it upon their heads, declaring he came down to take vengeance for the idolatries of their ancestors. So a child, allotted a certain portion of pain or distress or infirmities, receives no injury, whether they be brought upon him by nature, or accident or the wicked courses of his father: nor is he hurt by their serving for an example, to deter other parents from bringing the like misery upon their children.

10. But since offence must needs come, this suggests a reason for the unequal distribution of justice here on earth, for the slowness of vengeance, and why some notorious villains pass their whole lives in a course of uninterrupted success and security. For were punishment to follow close upon the heels of transgression, and the difference between good and bad made obvious to every eye, it must totally put a stop to offence: duty would become instinct, and rectitude the object of sense. So we should have no use for habits of virtue, or exercises of reason: which seem growing powers within us, destined for greater services than we can perform with
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them in these gloomy tabernacles and clumsy bodies we inhabit. And tho' offences must needs come, there are other uses of their coming besides that of making punishment just : for God produces good out of evil, which good must then be lost, unless the evil productive of it were permitted.

'Tis true, as we have observed before, that God often causes one provision to answer several purposes, and so may make moral evil, as well as natural, at the same time both prudential and punitory : but it is not apparent from experience that he always does so. And indeed if offence were not necessary, it would not have been permitted, and consequently there would have been no necessity for punishment ; whose use being only to restrain offence within due bounds, could have been none had there been nothing to restrain. Hence it follows there is a difference made between offences, which tho' all equally obnoxious to justice, do not all draw after them their respective adequate punishment. For when wisdom has adjudged the proper bounds to be set to offence, mercy withholds the arm of justice from taking vengeance where it is not necessary. But what else can we conceive to make the difference between pardonable and punishable offences better than repentance ? For this, if it does not take away,
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yet certainly lessens the necessity of punishment, by rendring it needless with respect to the party himself: because his amendment works the same effect upon his future conduct as was intended by punishing him. But if the first offence were constantly forgiven, it would be looked upon as a general licence to offend once: or if repentance were admitted at any time to wipe off old scores, it would encourage mankind, as we find the notion of it does many of them, to sin on without scruple, presuming upon the sponge of a distant repentance. For we see that neither God nor man will accept of repentance in all cases indiscriminately: let the debauchee or the leacher repent never so sincerely, he shall not presently deliver himself from the diseases which God, by his laws of nature, has annexed as a punishment to his vices. And I think it cannot do either hurt to Religion, or violence to reason, if we were to suppose that repentance, however it may abate, does never wholly take off, the punishment due to sins already committed: so that the principal, and that no contemptible, benefit accruing from it, is to prevent the heaping up further stores of vengeance by future offences.

If this be so, we have no reason to be grieved at any thing we suffer here for our misbehaviour: because then we have paid our penalty,

nalty, which would have been exacted from us some time or other. This opinion, while it leaves the expedience even of a death-bed repentance, shows it less valuable than an earlier, or than a life spent in piety and virtue: so that without cutting off all hopes from any, it removes the common excuse for delay under pretence that the business may be done as well at another time: for tho' it might be done another time, if you were sure of having another time to do it in, yet it can never be done so well nor to so good effect as now. Therefore it seems not improbable, that no man carries with him out of the world so great a load of sins as to merit intolerable sufferings: nevertheless the difference is very material between man and man. For the wicked, besides the long list of debts already contracted, carries with him an inveteracy of evil habits, that will prompt him to contract more: so that he can never clear his score, because new articles will multiply as fast as he pays off the old ones. And this is agreeable to the general belief, that the reprobate shall abound in moral evil as much as in natural. On the other hand the righteous and truly penitent, carrying with them a disposition to act rightly, wherein they may persevere after being delivered from the temptations of the body, will have nothing wanting to

to compleat their happiness, but to fetch up their old arrears.

11. The same origin we have assigned for vengeance, gives birth to the other branch of justice respecting rewards. But 'tis not every good, nor the thousandth part of that abounding throughout the universe, proceeds from justice: for we must distinguish between reward and bounty. That ample portion of happiness allotted the creatures in some part or other of their Being, we can ascribe to nothing else than pure unmerited bounty: and is itself the ultimate end, or at least the ultimate we can conceive, causing that bounty to flow; being not given as a means of effecting any thing subsequent, nor in consideration of any former behaviour. Nevertheless it is not poured upon us by an immediate act of omnipotence, but powers are given us to work it out for ourselves and one another by our own activity duly exerted in our several stations. And this alone might suffice to make us bestir ourselves effectually, if we had largeness of understanding to discern, and strength of mind to pursue it before present gratification. But since we have not always a knowledge of the good effects of our measures, nor feel them weigh with us when removed too far, nor can distinguish the avail of our industry in conjunction with many fellow labourers:

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bourers : it becomes necessary that some part of the blessings assigned us should be brought nearer to our view, and annexed to certain actions in such measure as may touch our desire, in order to serve as incitements to pursue the courses of behaviour most beneficial to our interests. And these encouragements are what we may properly understand by rewards : which are the provisions of wisdom rather than the largesses of bounty, and given not so much for their own sakes as for something they are calculated to produce.

Thus justice in both her branches springs from the narrowness and weakness of our faculties : for tho' expedience be the foundation of merit, nevertheless, as we have said in our Chapter upon honour, which is one species of reward, so every other species in general belongs to things, not always where they are usefull, but where it may be usefully conferred upon them. For where we have prudence enough to discern the usefulness of measures and to pursue them, there needs no encouragement of reward : whose use is only to supply the deficiencies of prudence, and conduct us along a road of expedience we wanted light or vigour to travel thro'.

Nor can we fail to see this idea confirmed if we look into the common transactions of life : while a man can attend properly to the
management

management of his family, his estate or his business, upon contemplation of the expedience, or by a habit he has acquired, he wants nothing more for his benefit: but if he finds himself grow remiss and indolent, what can he do better than consider what the world will say of him, or he shall think of himself, according as he amends or persists in his negligence? thus giving a spring to his industry by the terror of shame and compunction, or the prospect of general or self-approbation. We invite children to their task by rewards, which when they have gotten a liking or seen the expedience of their learning, we lay aside, or turn to some other beneficial acquisition whereto they have no propensity. Privileges and immunities are granted to persons of a particular profession wanted in some country: but after the success of these first adventurers is become notorious, those encouragements are no longer needfull. Public honours and emoluments may be regarded as engines of state, serviceable to actuate mens endeavours in promoting the public service. Nor might it be amiss if those in power would consider them in this light, as matters of reward, not of favour, under the disposal of justice, not of ambition or personal liking, and to be bestowed accordingly where most conducive to the general good.

good. Nor would it save them a little trouble if they could infuse the like notion into such as teaze them perpetually at their levees : so as not to think themselves entitled to ask for honour or preferment, unless when the conferring it would prove an example encouraging to some usefull conduct.

12. It is remarkable, that generosity gains greater applause than frugality, altho' equally a virtue, infomuch that noble and generous are become synonymous terms : the reason of which is because applause is necessary to the one, to overcome that greediness of temper inclining men to engross every thing to themselves ; whereas the expedience and convenience visible to every considerate person are sufficient inducements to the other. Hence we may learn that virtue is not laudable in herself, her value arising from the good fruits she bears ; but approbation, whether of others or our own, is annexed to stimulate us in the pursuit of her. And this approbation resting sometimes upon a phantom assuming her likeness, nothing can better cure the delusion than to examine what fruits we may expect to gather from the conduct we follow. Therefore it is mischievous to fix our eye too strongly upon the beauties of virtue, or more than necessary to keep up our spirit in running her courses vigorously : because it will be rather

rather apt to engender pride and vanity than to promote her interests.

Hence we may account for the peculiarities of the Stoics, who placing the goodness of virtue solely in her intrinsic laudableness, became the most presumptuous and arrogant of mortals, and entertained the most whimsical notions of virtue that ever were invented. But the expression so current among them of virtue being her own reward, which relates to the self-approbation she constantly draws after her, might show that approbation is not the thing which first makes her recommendable: for reward, in the nature of it, is something annexed arbitrarily to gain our estimation to a procedure which had a value before, grounded upon some other bottom.

Nor can I find the Stoics less romantic upon the article of happiness than the Epicureans: which latter placed it wholly in sensitive pleasure, and insisted that the wise man might make any sensation pleasant meerly by willing it: so that when roasting in Phalaris's bull, he had nothing else to do than cry out, How delightfull is this warmth to my senses! and the pain would instantly vanish. But the Stoic utterly despises pleasure and pain, as having no existence unless in the opinion of fools and madmen; and places his happiness in the amiableness of rectitude.

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What then has he to do, when thrust into the burning bull? only to cry in like manner, How delightfully lovely is rectitude! whose charms I now possess; for I certainly act right in staying here, because I cannot get out.

13. Now if we turn to the administration of affairs in this world by the government of providence, we shall find there are rewards annexed to several courses of proceeding. Health is the natural reward of temperance, plenty of industry, content of humility, hope of piety. Men often find profits when they least expected it, arising visibly from their having acted right: and who so casteth his bread upon the waters shall sometimes find it again after many days. It cannot be denied that these things prove an encouragement to well doing: and it can as little be denied that the provisions of heaven are made with a view to those effects we see them produce. And perhaps most of the good things we enjoy may be intended to work the effect of rewards, by leading into practices and dispositions of mind, whose uses extend to distant regions and times, whither we cannot trace them; and so given primarily for our future benefit, rather than our present enjoyment. Yet we may esteem the latter consideration likewise to have a share in the provision: for
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it is not incongruous for bounty to join in the same work with justice. Or if the latter must take her course, since there are two roads by which she may pass; to turn her upon the flowery turf of reward, rather than the rocky-pointed causeway of punishment.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that the distribution of reward, as well as punishment, is very unequal in this world: and that of equal good deeds, as well as equal offences, some meet with their desert, while others pass unnoticed. But this need not prove a stumbling block: for justice having always a respect to future expedience, will neither reward nor punish, unless where necessary for example sake. If she were to do otherwise she would overthrow her own purpose. For did the adequate reward constantly attend every good deed, virtue must lose her essence and become self-interest: because the eye fixing always upon the profit, satisfaction and desire could not be translated to the conduct obtaining it. Man indeed must follow his rules of justice implicitly or else he would lose his way, because he seldom stands in a situation to discern the reasons of them: but whenever he can proceed upon discretion, he apportions his rewards according to the services he expects resulting from them, not according to the intrinsic goodness of the deed;

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as we have seen already in the instances produced a little while ago.

14. Divines have always made the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments a proof of a future life, that there may be room for justice to settle the accounts she leaves unfinished here. Now it must needs be owned that the view of justice we have exhibited deprives them the benefit of that argument in the manner they handle it. For justice respecting only example, when she has made her distribution sufficient to restrain offence within proper bounds, and nourish virtue to the proper degree of maturity, has executed her task; nor has anything further to do with the balancing of accounts. Yet they need not be angry with me too hastily, for when we come to confer notes together, provided we do it in the amicable calmness of Christian charity, the difference will be found meerly nominal, not real. For the distinction I make between the Attributes of Equity and Justice, I believe is a new one; the latter being currently understood as a general term, comprehending them both. So that I may hope to satisfy my complainants, only by changing my stile without changing my sentiments: for I have employed a whole Chapter to show that justice, taken in this comprehensive latitude, requires a balancing of accounts in some future

ture form of Being; and that with greater exactness and more universal equality, than I fear some of them will forgive me for.

But if they would examine distributive justice apart, it would puzzle them to make out any demand upon that; for though God will not punish unless for offence, yet nobody can deny him a right to pardon where there has been offence: therefore if I suffer no more than my deserts, I have no injury done me, although the like should be remitted to another, nor would it do me any service to have him receive them in another life. As to reward, the most orthodox can hardly lay claim to that upon the score of justice, for when we have done our best, we are still unprofitable servants: therefore it is of pure unmerited bounty that God gives any reward at all, and if he withhold it from me, shall my eye be evil because he is good and gracious to another? or what damage does his being so gracious do me, for which I should be entitled to receive amends in another life?

Nevertheless the unequal distribution of good and evil upon earth has been constantly thought evidence of a future account, by all religious and considerate persons; which shows plainly that the persuasion of a divine equity is more generally entertained and more strongly rivetted in men's minds than they

they themselves are aware of: or than they care to own, when they would set up a title to peculiar privileges, or justify their contempt of inferiour creatures, or their detestation of heretics and of their delinquent brethen. And this general consent I may take as no small confirmation of what has been delivered in former Chapters: for I am never so well satisfied with my own thoughts as when I find them co-incide with those of other people.

Thus our future expectations rest upon the goodness and equity, not the justice of God: his goodness affording the prospect of much greater proportion of good than evil in the universe, and his equity ensuring us our particular share of it. Nor does this lessen their strength, for so our hopes be well grounded, tis no matter whether they stand upon one Attribute or another: or rather they will stand firmer and securer when placed upon their proper solid foundation, than upon one that with fair examination may be found hollow and unstable.

15. But though distributive justice alone cannot ensure us any future fruits of our well or evil doing here, yet it may lead into a train of consequences that may bring us to the expectation of them. For since provision has been made for deterring from vice and inviting

ing to virtue, we cannot doubt but there are some important uses for which so much care has been taken: and since we find the dispositions of mind generated by these provisions often tend little or nothing to the advantage of mankind or improving the accommodations of life, we can as little doubt they yield more plentiful fruits elsewhere. Then reflecting on our own individuality and unperishable nature, together with our two primary properties of perceptivity and activity, whereby we shall remain for ever capable of good and evil; and contemplating the divine wisdom which does nothing in vain: we cannot suppose our existence and faculties given us for no purpose, but that we shall have an interest in the provisions made for future uses. But what likelier uses can we imagine of the dispositions contracted in our present course, than to fit ourselves for that we are to run hereafter? And how can we imagine ourselves fitted for any particular course, after being totally disunited from all corporeal mixture?

But men deceive themselves, as we have observed formerly, in their distinctions between body and mind, for want of making their separation clean, but taking some part of the former into their idea of the latter: and so place the talents, the genius, the

habits and stores of knowledge, in the mind itself. Whereas we have found upon a careful examination in the course of these enquiries, that our perceptions are according to the state of our judgement or fancy, being nothing else than the discernment of objects, expedient or pleasing or striking to our notice. But the mind or purely spiritual part, being an individual, has no parts, one whereof might discern the other, yet the object discerned must be distinct from that which discerns: so that what she discerns can be neither herself nor a part of her, nor any thing contained in her, but something corporeal presenting different objects according as diversly moved or modified. Thus we have no ground in experience, nor any reasoning we can draw from thence, to conclude that the mind can receive any habit or quality or alteration from what passes with us in life: nor that there is any essential and intrinsic difference between one mind and another. Therefore if there be a difference between departed souls, it must arise from some remains of their material organization carried with them.

Far be it from me to deny, that it lies in the power of God to confer good or evil by his own immediate act: but far be it from any other to deny, that it lies also in his power to do it by certain stated laws of nature;

ture ; for nature with her whole host of second causes, take direction in their every movement from his word. Nor can we plead authority to determine the point ; for that only tells us he will deal differently with the good and with the wicked, but tells not the manner otherwise than by figurative descriptions, to make sensible to our imagination so much as it imports us to know concerning the event : which whether produced directly by the hand of God, or brought to pass by the ministry of second causes, is equally his dealing. So the former manner is meer hypothesis, supported by no positive proof, but the latter stands confirmed by experience of his usual manner of dealing here below : where we see all events brought about by the operation of nature or chance or free agents. And for the supernatural works recorded, they appear to have been performed for manifestation of his power to dull and stiff-necked mortals : nor can we suppose them employed out of necessity, for want of other means in his hand to have accomplished his purposes.

16. Thus if we examine all our stores of experience, we shall find no evidence of a variation of power or quality or character among minds : nor that any one of them is not capable of perceptions received, and using corporeal instruments employed, by any other ;

nor yet that their union with body must be necessary and perpetual. For tho' we know of no perceptions unless received by impression from matter, yet matter may serve their uses by occasional application without a vital conjunction. From whence it appears there is no ground in natural reason to imagine, that if ever they get wholly disengaged from all corporeal mixtures, there shall be any difference of condition among them, either in respect of their endowments or their enjoyments or their offices : unless as they may employ themselves to assist occasionally in particular services for carrying on the general good.

There is no doubt but God can make a difference to what degree he pleases : but what evidence is there that he will ? or what can we conceive that should incline him to do so ? Not bounty, for that extends to all alike, being no respecter of persons. Nor resentment, for he harbours none. Nor damage sustained, for he can receive none, neither hath any defeated his Will. Nor yet justice, for that respects not the past as its ultimate point of view, but aims in all her measures at working alterations of habit and disposition ; which have no place in naked spirit, being seated in that part of our material composition vulgarly made a part of the mind. Or if there be

a communication of perceptions and mutual intercourse between spirits; what should induce them to behave variously to one another? What resentment or favour can there be, where there is no passion? What dislike or partiality among brethren, where there is no diversity of character? all children of the same father, between whom there is no claim of primogeniture, nor division of separate portions, but all tenants in common of the same inexhaustible estate.

Now if any body shall still insist that there is an essential and characteristic difference between mind and mind, because there may be so for any thing that we can demonstrate to the contrary: or that God deals arbitrarily with his creatures, having his elect and his reprobates, because he has full power and authority to deal with them as he pleases: or that a communication between spirits cannot subsist, because we cannot try the experiment to ascertain it: or that there cannot be sense, intelligence, activity and enjoyment, in a body too minute to touch our senses, because we cannot produce an instance of any such thing: I shall beg leave to put him in mind, that 'tis he who builds upon hypothesis and negative proofs, not I. For I endeavour to take experience for my guide, while I can have her assistance; and with respect to things invisible,

fible, where she fails me, or teaches that they must be different from the scenes she exhibits, I try to build my conceptions upon the best ideas I can form of the divine Attributes; and the proceedings of Providence lying within my observation, as the surest and only stable ground I have to rest them upon in these matters.

17. From all that has been observed it seems a natural conclusion, that the difference of condition between particular persons shall subsist no longer than while enclosed in some material composition: and that we shall not get quite clear of all corporeal integuments upon dissolution of this gross body; because provision is made in this life for uses that could not take place without them. How many various stages we have to pass thro', or how long our continuance among matter is to last, we have no ground even of conjecture to ascertain. But since all these things lie under the disposal of wisdom and goodness and equity, we may rest assured that, wherever our lot be cast, it will be such as shall conduce most to the general good, wherein we shall share our due proportion: that whatever pain or trouble or inconvenience shall befall us, will be no more than the exigencies of public service require: and that all the comfort and enjoyment shall be afforded and tenderness

derness shown us, that the nature of our occupation will admit. Nor can we suppose otherwise than that, how fine composition soever our future bodies may consist of, we shall still be no more than sensitivo-rational animals : and while enclosed within any corporeal integument, altho' our faculties may be larger and our sight more piercing than now, still we shall want that full discernment of the general interest, and ardency of desire towards it, sufficient to actuate us in all parts of our conduct ; therefore shall need nearer and more striking incitements to keep us in the pursuit of it.

Hence it may be presumed the province of justice extends throughout all the stages of animal life, but tho' we can find nouse for her proceeding to settle accounts of former behaviour unless we knew the transactions of this life were remembred exactly in the next, yet the provisions of nature seem to indicate, that the same event shall follow as if there were an impartial and rigorous reckoning. For the habits and acquisitions we get here, being preparatives to fit us for our several functions hereafter, tho' we leave the habits and acquisitions themselves behind, and enter into our new Being a blank paper, yet they must have worked such an alteration in our texture and constitution, as shall give us an aptness

to renew the old courses by which we first acquired them. So that the wicked will carry with him an obduracy of temper, productive of actions obnoxious to severer punishments than any executed upon him here: and the righteous a pliancy of nature obedient to the command of reason, which will lead him to merit more glorious rewards than he ever earned here. And the degree of either will correspond exactly to the course of life they have respectively followed in their present state. Nor do I see any thing that should hinder, but that the obduracy may have grown so strong in some, as to render them incapable of being touched unless by the extremity of suffering: so that they will continue always objects of vengeance, and always serve as an example and warning to the rest of their compatriots.

18. Nor do there want reasons to persuade us that the pleasures and pains of the next world will be much intenser than any we have experienced in this, if we carefully examine what experience affords us concerning the process whereby they are brought upon us here. When a man receives a blow with a stick across his shoulders, the stick strikes only upon his cloaths, they propagate the blow to the skin, the skin to his nerves, and the nerves to his sensory: which last alone
gives

gives him perception of the smart, all the rest being no more than channels conveying a mechanical impulse to one another. Had he had no cloaths on, the stick would have hurt him more upon his naked back, and had his skin been stripped off by a blister, he must have felt severer smart from a blow upon the raw flesh : nor is it an unreasonable consequence, that if the like stroke could be made upon any nearer channel, it would create a more pungent anguish. For we receive all our perceptions from the action of the sensory or mental organization : whatever stages the impulse of objects passes thro', there is no perception until it puts this in play. From whence it may be presumed that whenever this shall be laid bare to the stroke of things external, it must take a far stronger impulse therefrom, than while enwrapped within the load of cloaths composing this mortal body. And with respect to our acuteness of discernment, we stand much in the situation of a man at the further end of a long range of rooms, divided from each other by fast doors : who seeing nothing of objects without doors unless thro' a dozen glasses, cannot expect to have so distinct or clear a view of them as when presented to his naked eye.

Nor is it an objection that ideas of reflection, operating immediately upon the mental

tal organs, and wherein they alone are supposed to be concerned, are less strong and vivid than those of sensation : for when I think of a person just gone out of the room, I cannot paint so lively a picture of his features upon my fancy, as while he stood before me. But this is not always the case : for sometimes a grievous smart, or violent terror, will occur afterwards to the mind more powerfully than it did upon the sensation. Besides that we find our sensitive pleasures and pains encreased by the concomitant reflection attending them : insomuch that some have denied pain to be an evil, unless made so by opinion, which is the work of reflection ; nor can it be denied that many pains do not touch us, so long as we can keep our reflection intent on something else.

But tho' ideas of sensation, when recalled to the thought, were constantly, without exception, fainter than upon their first entrance by the senses, yet these are only copies of impressions made by external objects, and it is no wonder the copy should fall short of the original. Therefore let us make the comparison with ideas of reflection, strictly so called, being not materials imparted from without ; but new productions worked from them in the mind, such as our judgements, passions and persuasions : and we shall sometimes find

find them rising to so high a pitch as to overpower the action of our senses. A strong fit of desperation or resentment or love or jealousy will make men despise pains and labours, and the most terrifying objects standing in their way: and a violent affliction stupefies the mind against pains and pleasures and the notice of every thing around her. Since then our mental organization can affect us so vehemently without aid of the senses, and when laid open to external objects, without grosser covering to intervene, is likely to receive more vigorous impulses: we may expect a much quicker sensibility and stronger perceptions, when receiving them by that alone, without other channel beyond. Wherefore it is of greater importance to make good provision for the health and constitution of our future bodies, than of our present.

19. How intense the sufferings of another life may be, there is nobody can pretend to guess: for experience furnishes no rule to measure them by, nor can we gather any thing concerning things unseen unless from the Attributes. But our idea of goodness, which alone can set bounds to the necessity of justice, is so imperfect that it fails us upon this occasion. We know that God is good and will do nothing inconsistent with goodness: but what is or is not inconsistent therewith

with, we have no certain measure to ascertain. For the permission of evil forcing us to acknowledge some mixture of it incompatible with this Attribute, we know not where to stop in our estimation of the quantity. Reason indeed may convince us that every evil is inflicted as a necessary means to bring forth some greater good, yet this leaves us still in the dark : for we know neither the precise quantity of good, nor proportion of one to the other, so can find no rule of admeasurement to compute either the sum or the degree of evil necessary to answer the services of the universe. The enjoyments of this world exceed the troubles and vexations to so visible a degree, that the most miserable wretches upon earth still set a value upon life : nor does death cease to be the king of terrors, even to such as have no apprehension of any thing to come after. And those few who destroy themselves, do it rather to escape from some present pressing uneasiness, than upon a fair computation of the good and evil they might expect. Nor could Epicurus, who was no favourer of Providence, avoid setting down among his list of observations, That pain, if long, was light : if grievous, short.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged there are evils in life, shocking to human nature in the contemplation, horrid to think, how
horrible

horrible to feel ! racking pains of rheumatism and stone, and all that long catalogue of diseases described in Milton's lazar house ; terrors and lingring destructions under the ruins of earthquakes ; painfull perishings by fire ; tearings of ravenous beasts ; stings of venomous serpents ; miserable exits upon bite of a mad dog ; fractures, dislocations or inward bruises, by wars or accidents. What barbarities do not savage nations exercise upon their enemies ! What tortures and piecemeal executions have not been practised by tyrants and persecutors ! Or what can the wit of man invent more devilish than the ingenious cruelties of a popish inquisition !

Nor are there less terrible roads in the journey thro' life than in the passage out of it. The distresses of extreme poverty, hunger, nakedness, cold and scorching heat, the mischiefs of vice and debauchery ; the fatal errors of folly and inconsiderateness ; the sufferings of bodily infirmity and constitutional disease ; the vexations of injury, oppression and ingratitude ; the desolations of war and invasion ; the pressure of afflictions, losses and ruin ; the miseries of shipwreck and comfortless lengths of time passed on desolate shores or in an open boat, without covering or provisions or respite from labour ; the wretchedness of slavery, where the unhappy
negroe

negroe, perhaps a king in his own country, is thrown into a stinking hold, kept upon rotten pease besmeared over with tallow grease, and then delivered up to the inhuman Spaniard, who works him beyond his strength, and every now and then fells him to the ground with a hatchet, to show his power by way of entertainment to his visitors.

With such as do not think the negroe worth their concern because his skin is black, he cannot talk English, and was never christened, it would avail little to put them in mind of the miseries among the brute creation: whom nature has not only subjected to the hard services, severe usage and wanton cruelties of man, but has likewise instructed them to worry, destroy and torment one another. The cat plays with the mouse, cheats him continually with pretences of letting him escape, pats him when fainting to make him exert himself a long while before she devours him. The water-snake pursues the shrieking frog through all his turnings, till she gets his head into her mouth, then swallows him by slow degrees into her stomach, where he lies digesting for some days before he dies. The spider has a long struggle to entangle the fly, till at last he wraps her up close in his web, and sits at leisure sucking out her vitals. The beetle, whose characteristic is stupidity
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and unwieldiness of limbs, beats himself down against a tree, or overturns himself in crawling, and lies sprawling upon his back; until the little tit-mouse comes, pecks a hole in his side, scoops out his entrails, and leaves the hollow carcase to crawl about alive.

But to return to those of our own species with whom we daily converse and for whom we have a consideration: they have their private troubles and anxieties, more than they discover to us, for nobody knows where the shoe pinches so well as he that wears it. When men appear together in company, they put on a cheerfulness upon their countenances, but who knows what grinding disquietudes they have at home? Unnatural parents, faithless wives, disobedient children, ungratefull friends, deceitfull patrons, approach of ruin in their fortunes, disappointment of schemes they had set their hearts upon, resentment of cutting affronts, animosities against persons they cannot hurt, flights of the world upon their supposed merit. Add to this the terrors of complexional fear and superstition: apprehensions of fires or robbers, dread of the small pox or infectious airs, frights of apparitions, prognostics and dreams, doubts about predestination, desperations of a future state, aridities and despondencies of Methodism, misgivings of Free-thinking.

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We may laugh at these grievances as fantastical, but how fantastical soever in their causes, they are real in their effects; nor are the pains of disorders in the mind less pungent than of those in the body, or of afflictions and disasters coming from external causes: and perhaps if we could look into the hearts of mankind, we should see them suffer more from imaginary evils than from real.

Thus we see by experience how great a weight and variety of evils are consistent with infinite goodness: and may gather from thence how strong must be that necessity which could introduce them into a plan contrived in mercy and loving kindness. Yet as we know not the grounds of this necessity, we cannot tell how much stronger it may prevail in other stages of our existence: nor to what acuter sensations, more grievous distempers of mind, and more tormenting delusions, our naked organizations may be liable. So that although we should not think an elementary fire, or a corporeal worm, reconcilable with our philosophical notions, there may well be punishments, if not similar in kind, yet equal in degree, to the scorplings of unextinguishable flames and gnawings of the neverdying worm. Therefore notwithstanding God be good and gracious, there are terrors of the Lord alarming enough, if justly apprehended,

hended, to excite our contrivance and industry in providing for the health and good condition of our future bodies : that when reduced to them, we may not want activity and disposition to steer safe from the purlieus of vengeance, and keep under protection of the wide-spreading wings of mercy.

But there is an art and discretion to be used in the application of those terrors : for if we dwell upon them only in our retirements, they will generate nothing but a dismal and unavailing affright. Therefore it behoves us to inculcate them then upon our minds in such colours and figures, as may rise readily again in seasons of action and attacks of temptation, and may then be most affecting to our imagination upon a single glance. For I have all along maintained, that use and expedience is the point to be driven at, as well in the conducting of our thoughts as of our outward behaviour.

20. Neither can any body tell precisely of what kind the enjoyments of another life shall consist : but those who go about to paint them by figurative representations seem not always to have chosen such as are proper to strike upon the imagination. They tell us the righteous shall live exempt from all pain, labour, hardship, oppression, infirmity or disappointment, and all tears shall be wiped

from their eyes. So far 'tis well : but this is only a negative happiness, such as may be found in annihilation : but what actual enjoyment are they to have ? Why, they shall sing psalms all day long and every day. This may be vast pleasure, for ought I know, to a mind rightly tuned, but as our minds are strung at present, I believe there is scarce any body who would not be tired of singing psalms before half the day was out, or after having sung out the whole week would have much stomach to sing again on sunday.

But then they shall sit in white robes, with crowns on their heads, and all be kings. This may weigh much with such as are fond of fine cloaths, and would be prodigiously delighted to hear themselves called, Your Majesty : but if we are all to be kings, where are our subjects ? Oh ! the toils of government would be troublesome : but we shall be called to the bench to sit as assessors in judging the wicked, and triumph over all our enemies. This may have charms with the methodists and others of an ill natured religion : but for my part I should esteem the condemnation of malefactors a burthen rather than an amusement ; I never sign a mittimus to the house of correction, but had much rather it were done by somebody else ; and if I had any enemies I think I should not wish to in-

sult

sult and triumph over them, or if I did take vengeance upon them, should do it as a matter of necessity not of gratification. Besides, all this will furnish employment only for the day of judgement: when that day is ended, there will be nothing further to do.

Well, but their enjoyment of the beatific vision will not cease. I can imagine there may be an extreme delight in the full and clear display of the divine Attributes, particularly that of goodness; for I have experienced a proportionable degree of satisfaction in the contemplation, so far as I have been able to comprehend them. But this is only in my retirements, when I can bring my thoughts to a proper pitch by long and carefull meditation: when I go abroad into the world upon my common transactions, I do not find this idea attend me in full vigour and complexion; and believe those who want incitements most will be scarce feebly touched with the hope of seeing God as he is. Besides, as I have powers of action as well as of reflection, I cannot readily conceive that in a state of blifs, one of them should remain uselefs, nor how enjoyment can be compleat which rests in speculation alone. In short, all propounded to us in the common harangues upon this subject, seems to be no more than an Epicurean hea-

ven, a monastic happiness, an undisturbed pious idleness.

But give me for my incitements, a life of activity and business; a constant succession of purposes worthy a reasonable creature's pursuit; unwearied vigour of mind; instruments obedient to command; exemption from passion, which might lead me astray; unsatiating desires of the noble and generous kind; clearness of judgement to secure me against mistake or disappointment; company of persons ready to assist me with their lights and their helping hand, so that we may join together with perfect harmony in that best of services, the exercise of universal charity, in administering the laws of God and executing his commands. And if I have therewith a largeness of understanding, these occupations need not hinder but that, while busied in them, I may feast upon the contemplation of whatever glorious objects shall be afforded me, either in the works of nature or the Author and contriver of them.

Some Religions propound rewards alluring enough to human sense: a Mahometan paradise may suit very well with Asiatic luxury: but then such incitements are worse than none, as being mischievous to practice. For as one is naturally inclined to enure one's self to the way of living one expects to follow, they

they are better calculated to lead into the road of destruction than of happiness. Nor are our modern enthusiasts less blamable in flattering their mob with the privilege of insulting and ill using their betters : for of the two, a man is not drawn so far aside from the spirit of piety by the thought of possessing a Seraglio of beautifull wenches, as of having a Lord or a Bishop bound hand and foot for him to kick and cuff about as he pleases.

Therefore in the figures employed to describe the things unseen, care should be taken to admit nothing gross or sensual, vindictive or spitefull : but the business is to employ such as may be possible, innocent and inviting. This is what I have attempted in the three Chapters of the Vehicular and Mundane states and of the Vision : endeavouring to exhibit a scene of things possible, so as nobody can certainly disprove them ; innocent, so as to contain nothing offensive to good manners or charity ; and inviting, so as to present striking images that may dwell upon the imagination. And I have so far succeeded, that upon reading them to a very sensible man, his remark at the end was, Well, I wish all this may be true. Now this was what I intended, and if my Readers shall be ready to say too, Well I wish all this may be true, my purpose is answered. I do not desire them

to believe it true, they may use their judgement or pleasure upon this point ; but meant only to present them with an encouraging prospect they can hold in their eye : and they may find solid and substantial reasons elsewhere to convince them, that if they take the due method for attaining it, they shall enter upon a scene of things which will be as well or better for them than if all this were true.

21. As to the punishments commonly described, they are alarming enough to human nature: perpetual burnings, inconsolable remorse, continual tormentings by devils, incessant quarrels and mutual outrages amongst the damned. To which are added, for taking stronger hold upon the imagination, the ideas of darkness, howlings, scourges, pincers, claws, horns and cloven feet. But these things operate strongest upon the flegmatic, the weakly and the low spirited, who want encouragements rather than terrors : which are more apt to dismay and stupify than rouse them up to activity, and therefore are most plentifully laid on by Popish priests and leaders among sectaries, who have their private ends to serve by the dismay.

Nor is it always safe to follow the best authorities too closely, for a man may do very wrong by imitating another who has done very right : wherefore human nature, manners

ners and sentiments must be considered, and regard had to particular times and countries, congregations and persons. The Jews, and primitive Christians derived from them or incorporated among them, seem to have been a serious solemn generation, accustomed to a pinguid turgid stile, as Tully calls the Asiatic rhetoric, abounding in extravagant metaphors, far fetched allusions, hard featured images, mysterious and enigmatical allegories, requiring painfull attention to understand or misunderstand them. Their tempers were soured by oppression and public contempt; for it is not in human nature to preserve an easiness and benignity of mind under continual opposition and indignities: therefore they could see no reward inviting which had not a mixture of retaliation and triumph, nor was the bliss of heaven compleat without the satisfaction of beholding their persecutors swallowed up in the devouring flames of hell. And being enured to look for something of latent importance in words and syllables, might be trusted with any figures, without hazard of turning them into ridicule, for which they had no inclination nor promptitude.

But we moderns living in ease and plenty, for the most part better fed than taught, affect the lively and amusing rather than the

pompous and the perplexing : instead of labouring to find mysteries in everything, we divert ourselves with turning everything into jest ; and have gotten the knack of making a trifle of whatever would naturally be most affecting to the imagination. And because our forefathers multiplied words until they confounded themselves, we are so afraid of falling into their dulness that we place reason in smartness of expression, and expect to have every difficult point decided in a single sentence. Those to whom terrors would be most serviceable, being persons of strong spirits, sanguine complexions and hardy constitutions, able to bear a bang or a burn without flinching, are little touched with bodily pains : and being generally of unlucky dispositions, they delight in broils and squabbles, finding themselves able to make their party good whatever adversary they have to cope with, and being used to abuse others and receive abuse themselves, care not what company they fall into. By foisting in the word Little, they can reduce any pain to a bearable size : for what signifies a little scorching or a little flogging ? and by familiarizing themselves to the term Damnation, they can wear away all meaning belonging to it, so that it becomes a harmless sound, like the chirping of a sparrow. Then for the worm of conscience,

science, they have provided an effectual remedy against him, for they have seared up his mouth with a hot iron that he cannot bite. And the sooty countenance, horns and cloven feet of Satan, make him the odder figure; so he passes for an arch comical droll, that hates to be confined by rules, and plays any mischievous tricks for fun and merriment: therefore he and his imps bear a part in our pantomimes, and we can sit an hour together to divert ourselves with their surprizing cunning and feats of dexterity.

22. But if we could once catch these people in a sober mood, and prevail on them to lay aside for a moment their all-healing epithet Little, they might then learn to see a difference between the sharpest pains they have experienced, and the violence of unquenchable flames; between temporary squabbles they can laugh at when over, and endless contests with a superiour adversary who will leave them no respite nor inclination for laughing. And if they have a thought of the divine power, in whose hand all the sources of good and evil lie, they must see that, besides outward hurts and injuries, they may be tormented with inward pains of stone, or joint-racking rheums or other excruciating distempers; with intolerable thirsts, insatiable
cravings,

cravings, the horrors of melancholy and all dreadful disorders of mind. Nor are they sure of carrying with them that hardness of constitution they so much depend upon: for they must leave their solid bones, their tough-string muscles, their strong-bounding blood, that vigorous flow of animal spirits, the support of their present bravery, to perish in the grave; and may be born into new life with the fearfull weakness of a woman or helpless tenderness of a child, apt to be terrified at a word, to shudder at a shadow, and unable to bear the scratch of a needle.

But if they be so immersed in sensitive ideas of what they see and feel, that they cannot conceive themselves ever to become different creatures from what they are; let us suppose, for argument sake, they shall preserve the same sturdy constitution and temper they possess at present; and as they have little notion of God, we may talk to them more intelligibly of the Devil. Perhaps they may have been taught by some of those who are singly wiser than convocations and synods, that there is no such species of Beings in nature: but this will avail them little, for they may have met or heard of characters among the human species excellently well qualified for the office of a tormentor; and it will not much mend the matter, if they be put into
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the hands of a savage Canadian, a barbarous Algerine, or unrelenting Spanish inquisitor bred up in the science of torturing and taking cruelty for his ruling principle of action.

But whatever race the Arch-fiend be descended from, they must not expect to find him the frolic gamesome droll they have seen upon Covent garden theatre: but a solemn melancholy tormentor loving mischief for mischief sake, going to work with deliberate malice, inveterate rancour and insatiable cruelty. Nor will he show them fair play in boxing, but take all cowardly advantages, not letting them get up when fallen nor giving them time to breath when fainting, but calling in his imps to hold their arms while he pommels them. And if he have horns or cloven hoofs, they are not for the oddity of his figure, but to punch their eyes or mouths or other tender parts.

And even supposing what cannot well be supposed, that they are so stout as to value all this no more than a flea bite, he will then take some other course with them: for he is a devilish cunning fellow, knows how to find every one's weak side and what will plague them effectually. Therefore if he perceives them insensible of pain, he will not throw away his brimstone and his scourges upon them, but take some other method that shall make them
heartily

heartily sick of his company. He will tantalize them with scenes of exquisite viands and delicious liquors, frothing in the pot or sparkling in the glass, raise intolerable thirsts and cravings, and not suffer them to touch a drop or a morsel. With a whirl of his Faustus wand, he will conjure up a bevy of buxom lasses, to tempt them with all lascivious allurements, and cram them with apples from the tree of knowledge, which shall raise desire to its utmost pitch of burning fury; but take especial care that it shall meet with no gratification. He will lay in their way treasures of gold and jewels carried by helpless children, whom when they go to murder for the booty, their arm shall wither up, so that they may strike and strike again without effect. He will represent the Deity as an angry revengefull tyrant, resolved to have his Will upon them for trifling offences; foreshow them the particular sufferings it is his Will to inflict, and how themselves are continually made instrumental to bring on those sufferings; whereby he will raise a worm of resentment, vexation and despair, whose bite is severer than that of conscience they had stifled. If he finds them of delicate tempers, he will plunge them into filth and ordure: if courtly, he will comfort them among savages and hottentots: if musical, he will din their ears
all

all day long with shrieks and howlings, scratching of knives upon one another, and the crash of broken beams: if proud, he will force them to servile drudgeries under command of persons they despised, and to receive insults, contemptuous language and cutting reproaches. Or if they have antipathies against particular animals or things, he will accordingly tie them round with knots of vipers, wrap them up in webs for a prey to monstrous spiders, shut them close among enormous toads, or cats, or stuff their mouths with carrion or rotten cheese.

I do not recommend these last images to be used in assemblies, because what might affect one man strongly, might appear a joke to others who have not the same antipathy. But there is no man without some distastes and aversions he cannot think on without horror: let him then figure to himself the situation he should most vehemently dislike, and he may be assured there are punishments in nature which would afflict him as sorely. But there is no doubt they will be sharp enough to overcome his obduracy at last: therefore he had better get rid of it while he can upon cheaper terms, for the more inveterate it grows, the severer remedies will be requisite. Or if they be applied just below the measure sufficient for working a cure, this will be an
encrease

encrease of vengeance by prolonging the continuance of that evil disposition whose removal would render punishment needless.

C H A P. XXX.

D U R A T I O N O F P U N I S H M E N T.

IF the doctrine of equality maintained in the forgoing Chapters, shall appear a novel and heterodox opinion, I hope the candid Reader will do me the justice to believe, it was not upon that account I offered it to his consideration. For I have constantly professed, and I think have all along preserved, a tendernefs for prevailing sentiments, and tho' in the exercise of that sober freedom which is the natural right of every thinking man, I may have departed from them for a while, it has been only to return again into the beaten road, and to take what seemed to me the surest method of arriving at the practical conclusions commonly drawn from them. Nor am I so fond of novelty, or the credit of making discoveries that have escaped others, as to purchase it at the expence of Religion or good manners. If I have any desire of reputation, it

it is that arising from the character of a discreet and well applied industry in the service of mankind. Therefore notwithstanding this equality appears to me to follow as demonstratively as any conclusion we can draw concerning things invisible, from experience of human nature acting constantly upon motives suggested, from the universal dominion of Providence, governing even freewill by means of those motives, and from the unlimited mercy and bounty of God, extending over all his creatures without partiality or arbitrary proceeding; which I hope will be counted orthodox tenets: nevertheless I should have kept it concealed within myself for fear of disgusting the weakly righteous, whether great scholars or illiterate, if I had not found it a necessary foundation, and indeed the only one I could discern by the light of reason, whereon to place that general interest from whence I apprehend may be deduced the practical rules of life, as well those relating to Religion, as to morality or common prudence.

For how much soever we may flatter ourselves with the notion of noble and generous innate principles, there always lies Self at bottom in every thing we do; and all men constantly pursue their own happiness, tho' by very various ways. One places it in distant good,

good, another in present pleasure, another in riches or title or superiority or humour or self approbation : but whatever, whether real or fantastical, each man apprehends for the present most satisfactory to him, that is the object to which he directs his powers. Therefore if we could touch this universal spring of action, by showing clearly to every one's apprehension that his private interest stands connected with the general, nothing could more effectually inspire men with a hearty zeal for promoting one another's benefit, or help to rectify their sentiments of virtue. Because the Generality consisting of individuals, whatever proves beneficial to any one, is an addition of good among the Whole : and because every genuine virtue tends to procure benefit to the whole, or a part of it, or some individual contained therein, without more endamaging any other ; and whatever does not do so, either immediately or remotely, is no virtue, but may be pronounced spurious. Yet it must be owned, our equality, which we have laboured to cultivate in hopes of bearing such excellent fruits, has one inconvenience attending it : that it is incompatible with an absolute perpetuity of punishment. But as this may be thought of pernicious tendency, by taking off the discouragement against evil-doing ; a consequence I should be very sorry to

to have given a handle for drawing, I have appropriated this Chapter to obviate the mischief, by showing that nothing before contained can be justly construed to lessen the discouragement,

2. But before I enter upon this task, I shall take the liberty to observe an objection that lies against the perpetuity of punishment, in the phenomena whereof we have experience. Justice, in the received idea of it, requires an exact distribution according to the character of every individual. 'Tis not enough that reward be given to the good and punishment to the wicked, but the proportion of each must be measured out among the persons of either class, according to their respective degree of goodness or badness. Accordingly we are taught to expect a difference, not only between the good and the bad, but between the good and the better, the bad and the worse: for that the righteous shall rise above one another, as one star differeth from another star in glory; and of disobedient servants, he that offendeth much shall be beaten with many stripes, and he that offendeth little with fewer stripes. Since then there is an exact proportion observed, corresponding with every little variation among individuals, and the difference between everlasting bliss and everlasting misery is immense:

it follows that there must be the like immense difference of character between the good and the wicked; for else the rule of justice would be violated. But this we do not find true in experience: for there are all gradations of character, falling by imperceptible degrees, from the most perfect man that ever lived down to the most abandoned villain.

It may be said we cannot penetrate into the secrets of the heart, nor discern all the depravity lurking there. This I acknowledge we cannot do with any exactness, yet there are none of us who do not undertake to pronounce some persons righteous and others wicked: so that we can make a judgement where the case is glaring, tho' we cannot always do it critically. Therefore it would be no wonder if we were only puzzled in comparing two good men, to determine which was the best; or two bad men, which was the worst: but we are often egregiously deceived in our opinion of good and bad, taking the one for the other, nor can we pronounce upon many persons we know, to which class they belong: that is, we cannot distinguish between characters as wide asunder as heaven is from hell. For the smallest portion of eternal happiness is infinitely preferable to the mildest of eternal sufferings: and the step from the topmost summit of hell to the

the lowest seat in heaven, infinitely greater than from thence to the seat immediately above, or perhaps I might say, to any seat reserved for human soul. Nor would it much mend the matter if we were to suppose a purgatory: for any finite punishment followed by endless bliss, is still infinitely more desirable than endless torment.

Thus there is an exact proportion of justice between the individuals of either class, but between the two classes there lies an immeasurable gap: which would destroy all proportion, unless there be the like immeasurable gap somewhere among the characters of mankind, which we may presume must be so obvious as to strike every eye; so that none could ever fail in distinguishing the classes, however they might mistake in the particular centuries under each. Nor does the fallibility of human judgement concerning the real character of particular persons remove our objection: for I defy any man to draw, much more any two men to agree in drawing, the character of a sinner, whether real or fictitious, who if he were ever so little better, would be admitted to a portion in eternal glory: or of a righteous person, who if he were one degree less righteous, would become a sinner reserved to eternal sufferings. Besides, as the best among us have their fail-

ings and we are all sinners, for there is none that doeth good, no not one : there cannot be that vast difference between the most opposite characters upon earth, between the greatest of sinners and the least, as is supposed to be made in the recompenses respectively allotted them.

3. And those who place salvation in faith alone remain liable to the same difficulty : for a saving faith must be right, and it must be strong : but there are degrees of rectitude and of strength in faith, as well as any other virtue. Will any man assert that every little error in matters of belief, and every falling short of the invincible confidence of a tortured martyr, shall exclude from heaven : or every faint and inconsiderate assent to the orthodox faith secure a place in it ? Thus there are degrees of faith and infidelity as well as of morality and immorality. Yet how have doctors differed upon the articles of faith ? what endless disputes have they carried on in settling the list of fundamentals ? And one of the most sensible among them, Chillingworth, has shown that fundamentals are relative ; that article being such to one man which is not so to another, according to their several lights and capacities. And I think it very happy for the world this matter was never settled ; because if men knew what was just
enough

enough to carry them to heaven, they would not do a stitch more than absolutely necessary: whereas being left in uncertainty they must use all their diligence, for fear a part of it should not be sufficient to make them safe.

But supposing the articles settled, there would still continue the like uncertainty with respect to the strength of persuasion in them, requisite to make a saving faith. How many pious Christians labour under cruel anxieties upon this head? They receive all the doctrines of their Church without reserve, so their doubt is not upon the rectitude but the liveliness of their faith. If they go to the Protestant Vicar or Popish Confessor, the latter may give them absolution upon their paying for it, or the former tell them they want no absolution upon this account: but neither can instruct them how to know at all times, when they have proved deficient and when not. For who can assign the just measure of assent that distinguishes between a dead and a lively faith? or mark out the exact line of separation between the believer and the infidel? so that whoso passes it, enters the state of salvation; and whoso falls a hair's breadth short, remains a child of perdition. Which yet, if we regard the distribution made by justice between the two, ought to be, not a

mathematical line, but a spacious gulph, like that which separated Dives from Abraham.

But it is said that justice has no concern in this part of the distribution: for all have sinned and all become obnoxious to her never ending severity, until mercy interposed to rescue a certain number. What then, are not all the Attributes infinite? Is the arm of mercy shorter or weaker than that of justice? Or does our God, as was fabled of the heathen Jupiter, distribute his mercies out of a gaugeable tun, which when empty, he must stop at the next man standing close to him who last received invaluable treasures therefrom? No, but justice is a debt, therefore requires an exact apportionment to the desert of every particular person: whereas mercy is matter of meer favour, therefore subject to no rules; for God may extend his favours as far as he pleases and stop where he pleases, and consequently by the interposition of his free mercy, may throw an immeasurable gap between persons whom justice would have treated nearly alike. I shall not deny he may do so, for who can hinder him? but if it be inferred from thence alone, that he does do so, this is building upon hypothesis; for what may be, may as well not be: nor have we reason to conclude for either branch of the disjunction unless we can find something in
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our idea of the Attributes to cast the balance between two things equally possible.

Therefore nothing can be gathered from what he may do, until it be known in what sense the word is understood: for it has been shown in Chap. XXVI. that May, Can and Possible, are equivocal terms, as relating either to power or contingency. In the former sense it is certain God may show mercy to whom he will, and withhold it from whom he will. This nobody doubts: for we are all in his hands, and he has full right and authority to deal with us as he pleases. But so he may distribute justice too without rule or measure: for who shall withstand his power? what restraint or obligation hangs over him? or who shall say to him, Why dost thou this? If then we say he cannot deal unjustly by his creatures, we found the assertion upon our idea of his nature, inclining him to govern invariably with perfect righteousness: and what we say, amounts to no more than an assurance that he never will.

Now let us apply the expression the same way to mercy, and we shall find it hard to comprehend that he may show infinite mercy to whom he pleases, and withhold every spark of it from whom he pleases, without any other rule or reason than his own meer pleasure. For mercy is as much in his nature

as justice, nor is one less infinite than the other is perfect : neither does he proceed arbitrarily in either, but both are guided by the rules of infinite wisdom. Therefore mercy never tires in dispensing her inexhaustible treasures, nor ever stops when come to a certain point of delinquency, until wisdom represents that the offender could not be spared without damage to the creation : and then it would be mischief, not mercy, to pass the line of separation. Thus we find the sinner who wants the just measure of righteousness or saving faith, is doomed to everlasting flames, while another but little better is rewarded with everlasting bliss : not because God has not mercy enough to save both, but because it is expedient that one should perish for the benefit of the creation.

Can we then persuade ourselves that the common father of all should so severely sacrifice some of his children to the good of the rest, without reserving to himself a time wherein his mercy may make a compensation ? Or what rule of reason will permit that the heaviest burthens of public service should lie for ever upon the same persons ? Nor does there want an argument that they do not, taken from facts within the reach of our observation ; which are, the daily departure of persons dying in their sins. For
where

where any collection or number receive a continual encrease, it is a presumptive evidence of their having continually a proportionable discharge. To what purpose then are fresh additions made, unless to supply fresh vacancies, where the number is already full? as we must conclude it always to have been ever since there were creatures existent. For can we conceive that God would permit the requisite examples of suffering ever to be wanting in the universe? or that he will permit them ever to abound more than wanting? or what ground have we to imagine a greater quantity of evil necessary now than was two thousand years ago? What then shall we say to those countless multitudes that your pious Christians assert have been cast into everlasting flames in that time? Have they all perished gratis, without any benefit to the world, which might have done as well without their punishment, having samples enow of it before? Is it not more natural to conclude they go to occupy the places of others, who from time to time have obtained their deliverance? Thus we see the doctrine of endless punishment has no foundation in human reason, and we must have recourse to the inspired writings for proofs to support it: if such proofs are there to be found, which I shall offer some reasons to question.

4. If I were to imitate some of our profound doctors, who run to the original text for a word wherein they may find a sense unthought of before, to support their particular opinions: I might insist that the term translated Everlasting, ought to be preserved untranslating, as a kind of technical term, and called Aionian. I might then lay down that as the age of man contains that space of time passing between his birth and his death, so the Aion, or greater age, contains the whole length of his journey through matter. Therefore Aionian punishment is a state of suffering to last from his death until he shall get wholly clear of all corporeal organization. I might observe likewise it is remarkable that in speaking of God, whose eternity every body must allow to be absolute, it is said that he shall endure, not simply to the Aion, that is, for ever, but to the Aion of Aions, that is, for ever and ever: which marks a visible difference between the duration of punishment and absolute eternity.

But I am not fond of this kind of argumentation, which is better calculated to stop an adversary's mouth than to convince him. I hold it more expedient to consider fairly what are the ideas intended to be conveyed by the expressions in the text. Now we are told the Gospel was preached to the poor, that

that is, the ignorant and unrefined, therefore is best expounded in the sense wherein such would naturally understand it: nor are we warranted to look for scholastic or philosophical notions in anything contained there. Mankind in the earliest ages, of which we know little more than what stands recorded in the books of Moses, seem to have had no notion of anything beyond this world: therefore the rewards and punishments proposed to them were all of the temporal kind, or at most such as related to their posterity and the remembrance of their names here upon earth. I shall not deny that some thinking persons did very early entertain an opinion of a life to come, and by degrees introduced it among the vulgar. But in the latter at least it amounted to no more than a persuasion that the soul should survive the body, without considering for how long continuance, yet without setting any limitation to it or thinking of anything beyond; wherefore they applied to it the epithet Everlasting. And so in common discourse we speak of an immense desert, a boundless ocean, an endless prospect; because neither the eye nor the imagination can find an end: and we talk of a man purchasing an estate to him and his heirs for ever; not that we believe the earth, or the lands whereinto it is apportioned,

tioned, eternal, but because no limitation is set to the possession.

In these cases we are something like those Indians of whom it is said they can count no further than twenty, and for all higher numbers point to the hairs of their head: so if you were to tell them of a flock of a hundred sheep, you can only point to the hairs: if of a thousand, 'tis the same; or if you talk of the immensity of space or infinitude of time, still you can do no more than refer to the hairs. In like manner we use the term For ever to express every length of time whereto we set no measure, nor consider anything beyond. Nor is it denied the Scripture sometimes employs this term for durations which cannot be supposed endless, and if it employs the same for such as are so, it is because none other of higher import was to be found in common language: therefore this being an equivocal term, requires something else to determine which way it is to be understood upon every particular occasion.

It has been alledged indeed that there is this something else: because the continuance of punishment is expressed in the same tenour of language with that of the reward promised the righteous, which every body allows to be endless. But why every body should allow this, I do not know; unless for want of distinguishing

guishing that the blessings of God are of two sorts : those which are given as a reward of obedience, and those which are given of his pure unmerited bounty, without regard to anything past, but flowing directly from infinite goodness. The bliss of the final state I have all along supposed eternal in the utmost extent of the word : which it may well be, notwithstanding a few excursions into mortality, that make little gaps, or rather imperceptible crevices in it, but do not limit its duration. Just as if a man were promised immortality and perpetual happiness here upon earth, he would not think it a falsification of the prophecy that he lost a part of every night in sleep, or passed an uneasy day once in twenty years. Now this bliss is the free gift and sole effect of bounty, extending to all alike, and requiring none other qualification than the capacity of receiving it. But 'tis the Aionian life and Aionian death, to continue during the journey through matter, that makes the conditions of men different, and depends upon their behaviour here below. Therefore this Aionian difference of conditions was all needfull to be inculcated for serving the purposes of Religion and morality : and this the vulgar would naturally understand of an unlimited duration, the utmost extent of their ideas, beyond which they

they would not think of looking for anything further.

For the distinction between a time whereto the thought can set no bounds and an absolute eternity, between the words Indefinite and Infinite, attempted in our Chapter on the divisibility of matter, were the refinements of modern ages ; wherein men have dived deeper into the abyfs of thought than their forefathers could do, by improving upon their labours. Now it would have done mischief to the vulgar to have perplexed them with these subtilties, which therefore are left open to the decision of human reason : nor would it have done service to any body to have decided them, because reason, with all her refinements, cannot lessen the discouragement there lies against evil doing. As I shall now endeavour to manifest, by resuming the main purpose of this Chapter, from which I have hitherto digressed.

5. Whoever will take pains in practising the method recommended at the close of the last Chapter, by figuring to himself a situation he should most vehemently dislike ; whether of scorching flames, cruel scourgings, slavish drudgeries, ghastly spectres, dreadfull casualties, inward pains, nauseous diseases, intolerable thirsts, cutting affronts, contemptuous insults, incessant vexations, or whatever else
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he finds most shocking to his thought, and from thence taking his estimation of future punishments, which however different in kind, we have given reasons to show, will exceed them in degree; may presently see that nothing in this world can make it worth his while to incur them. For let him compute all the pleasures of vice and folly that the longest life, with the most uninterrupted success, and his most sanguine hopes can promise him, and he will find the utmost amount of them immeasurably outweighed by an extremity of torment, tho' it were to last no longer than for a twelvemonth: and yet he must not expect to come off for so short a reckoning.

If he flatter himself that he shall become familiarized to his sufferings by long endurance until they lose their anguish because the like sometimes happens here; this is a vain imagination which he has no ground to build upon. Pain and labour abate of their grievousness here, because our bodily organs abate of their sensibility by frequent use, as our flesh becomes callous by continual pressing: but we do not find the like relief in disorders of the mind, unless those whereon the body has an immediate influence. Time may cure them by introducing other habits giving imagination a contrary turn, but can
never

never cure an old habit meerly by wearing it out. Boys begin to want money as soon as they know the use of it, and this want grows with their years ; so that covetousness is observed to be the predominant vice of old age. Those who have given way to anger and resentment in their youth, grow more touchy and revengefull the longer they live. And tho' carnal concupiscence take rise from the body, yet when the infection has been suffered to catch strong hold on the mental organization, it continues to plague the old lecher with the cravings and filthiness of debauchery, after he is past all capacity of the pleasures. Infomuch that Plato and many others have supposed the punishment of the wicked to consist of such insatiable desires as cannot find gratification for want of the corporeal instruments left behind. However this be, we have no reason, from any thing within our own experience, but to think that whatever pains or inconveniences arise from a disorder or infirmity in our mental organization, when disjoined from the body, shall continue so long as the mind continues in that Aion, or form of Being, and so shall be properly an Aionian punishment.

6. How long this continuance may be, there is nobody can undertake to determine : for we have no light from the Attributes, because

cause we know not what limitation must be set to evil to bring it consistent with infinite goodness. It seems not unlikely, what some have imagined before, that the mind does not get clear of all corporeal mixture ever the sooner for obtaining a quick discharge from her present habitation: but that there is a certain length of passage assigned her thro' matter. Wherefore, as a man who is to perform a journey in a certain time, if he makes his first stage very short, must travel so many more miles the next: so if she stays but little while in this life, she must abide so much the longer in that which is to follow, that the sum of both added together may compleat the appointed length. Upon this supposition we must conclude that every man's Aion exceeds the difference between the age at which he died, and that of the oldest man who ever lived: I say, exceeds, because there must have been an Aion reserved for the longest liver, both of the righteous and of the wicked, wherein they might receive the respective recompense of their deeds. Now if we can take Moses's word, the human body was built originally to stand near a thousand years: so that all the deaths appearing upon our present bills of mortality must be counted hasty and premature; nor can we, such men as live in

these degenerate days, expect a shorter Aion than that space of time.

But since 'tis not the fashion with every body to take Moses's word, let us argue with them, by parity of reason, from facts obvious to their experience, whose word it may be hoped they will take. The acorn lies ripening in the tree a part only of the summer, but the oak to grow from thence may last for ages. The embryo animal grows in the dam a few weeks or a few months, but comes from thence to live for years. The child is formed and fashioned in three quarters of a year, but when born may hold out to fourscore or a hundred. Thus we see that state, whether of animal or vegetative life, which nature employs as the introduction to another, bears a small proportion to the date of that whereto it is introductory. But it has been shown upon several former occasions, that our present life is preparatory to the next; and that the mental organization, vulgarly called the rational soul, lies like a little foetus within us, continually forming and fashioning by our behaviour and the occurrences befalling us here: from whence it may be presumed that all this provision is not made for effects of a short continuance, but the state for which we are preparing shall exceed our present in as high proportion as our date of life, barring accidents,

dents, would have exceeded our time of gestation in the womb: which will extend the Aion far beyond the thousand years before assumed.

7. Let us suppose then we could know for certain that the duration of future punishment were precisely one thousand years: what encouragement could this give to the sinner? Is not this length far greater than that of any enjoyment he can expect to get by sinning? Let him consider what it is to pass a day, a week, a month, in exquisite tortures, and he will soon find a less time than that we have specified sufficient to discourage him effectually from running the hazard. Suppose a wicked man talked to by the Parson of the parish, who terrifies him with the dread of everlasting flames, into the resolution of amendment. You come in afterwards and bid him not mind the parson, for you know better than all of them put together, and can assure him there is no such thing as everlasting flames. Ay! says the man, I am heartily glad of that, for then I may take my pleasure without fear of an after-reckoning. No, no, you say, I cannot engage for so much neither: you must expect to smart, but 'twill be but for a while, only a thousand years and all will be well again. What comfort could this give him? Must it not rather damp his spirits,

and the naming so vast a length, encrease his terrors more than the limitation to that term abate them?

For both choice and evidence have their certain weight to render them compleat: while below this pitch, you may encrease them by adding to the weights; but when once arrived at it, all further addition is superfluous. For in moral arithmetic, as observed before under the article of pleasure, the same rules do not hold good as in the common; nor does two and two always make four. If I hear an unlikely fact related by somebody I know little of; I shall not heed him much: if another confirms what he said, I may begin to doubt: two or three more agreeing in the same story may make me think it probable: but if twenty persons of approved honour and veracity asserted it upon their own knowledge, I should give an unreserved assent; nor could I do more tho' a hundred of the same character were to come in. So were a man offered a long life of pleasure for a month's future sufferings, perhaps he might be stout enough to accept the condition: were they encreased to a year, he might hesitate: but were they multiplied to a thousand years, he could not delay his choice a moment, if he had any consideration at all. Where demon-
stration

stration will not convince, nor things beyond all comparison determine the choice, it proves an insensibility in the mind which no further outward application can cure. If those who hear not Moses and the Prophets would not believe tho' one rose from the dead; neither would he that is not touched with a thousand years of severest punishment, be moved with an eternity. For it is plain the present wholly engrosses his imagination: he has no regard for the future; and you may as well make a blind man see by lighting up more candles, or a mortified limb, that has utterly lost its sensation, feel by laying on more stripes, as affect him by any future sufferings whatsoever.

Therefore since a mind that has any feeling of futurity will be filled with as much terror by the length above specified as it is capable of receiving, you cannot lessen the discouragement by paring off what lies beyond: and one that has no sense of any thing further than this present life, will not be affected by all you can say concerning an Hereafter; so you cannot lessen the discouragement where there was none. Besides, for a man to pretend he should have paid a due regard to his future state if I had not persuaded him it was finite, would be contradicting himself in the same breath: for why does he make nothing

of a limited term, unless because he conceives it fifty or threescore years distant? How absurd then is it to tell me he sets no value upon a reversion after threescore years, yet should value one extremely after a thousand years? He that makes this excuse either is not in earnest or deceives himself egregiously, and only catches hold of a specious argument to cover his thorough attachment to present pleasures.

8. Nevertheless if any think a longer duration will work more upon mens minds, let them please to remember that tho' I have offered considerations to make it probable the punishment will continue so long, I have not offered a single one to prove it will continue no longer. It may be rather inferred from the second argument I have employed, drawn from the analogy of seeds and embryos, that the length ought to be extended much further: for if you fix the life of man at seventy years, that term will be the mean proportion between the time of his gestation in the womb, and his Aion; then seek that proportion by the rule of Three, and you will find that as nine months are to seventy years, so are seventy years to six thousand five hundred thirty-three years and four months. But I do not pretend to ascertain this matter by arithmetical calculations, nor indeed to set any certain limitation whatever thereto: all I can
say

say with assurance is this, that it will be for so long as to answer the purpose intended by it: if a thousand years will not do, it shall be for ten thousand: if ten thousand will not do, it shall be for a hundred thousand. Be sure the unrepenting sinner shall suffer long enough to make it strikingly clear to the dullest apprehension and most stony heart, that he has made a foolish and a fatal bargain. And as it may be presumed one intention is to overcome his obduracy, if ever he shall be permitted to deliver himself, it must be by the same self-denials by which he might have escaped his punishment; therefore he had better practise them voluntarily now, than stay till compelled to it by extremity of tortures.

After all that has been suggested, if any considerate person should happen to come into my notion upon this article, I think he could not be induced thereby to become a whit the less careful of his future concerns: and for the inconsiderate, they are not likely to meddle with my speculations. But if any of them should be hurt, it may be attributed to the common practice of expatiating with all the powers of Oratory upon the word Eternal: which carries a tacit implication, that if punishment were not eternal, it would not be worth minding. This seems to be enuring men never to stir unless upon the strong-

est inducement: perhaps it might be more expedient to bring them into a habit of answering the gentlest call of judgement. It has been remarked that a trader never grows rich who despises little gains: and it might as justly be said, that a man never grows happy or prudent who despises little advantages, altho' large enough to be visible. The mind has been often compared to a fine balance, and we know the excellence of a balance lies in its turning with a hair: so the excellence of judgement lies in discerning the minutest difference; and the excellence of disposition, in pursuing measures readily upon view of the slightest preference.

Yet every innovation, even of a word, in the received form of doctrine, tho' not affecting the main purpose of Religion, that of making men better, is looked upon as dangerous; and I cannot help owning, with reason. Because the bulk of mankind, too lazy to think for themselves, take what they do take, upon the credit of their teachers: and if they find that credit shaken in any single instance, very hastily infer that every thing else taught them was meer invention or mistake. Therefore to avoid giving a handle whereby such pernicious consequence might be drawn, I shall proceed to make out, that the punishments of a future life may still be eternal. I doubt not
this

this will be thought a contradiction to that equality I have been labouring to establish: but before men pronounce things contradictory, let them be sure they have a clear and adequate notion of the terms whereby they are expressed.

9. What else is eternity besides an infinite length of time? and this we may think we have a clear apprehension of because we know what we say when we use the epithet Infinite: but the consequence does not follow, for tho' we have a clear idea of infinity, we have none of an infinite quantity. I need not be at the pains to prove this paradox too, Mr. Locke having done it before me: for he tells us the idea of infinity is that of being able to add perpetually without ever coming to an end. So that the infinitude of a quantity is its exceeding all our methods of computation, a circumstance we can easily comprehend belonging to it: but what does so exceed them cannot be the object of our comprehension, because whatever number we can clearly conceive, we might express exactly by figures; therefore it is no rule that there can be nothing beyond what is infinite, nor that all infinities must be equal. To the Indians mentioned some time ago, who could count no further than twenty, number twenty one must be infinite, so must fifty, so must a hundred,
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and a thousand : yet we who can count further, know these are different numbers, which may be subtracted from one another and still leave what to those savages shall remain infinite, expressible only by the hairs of their head. Much the same it is with ourselves, we can run prodigious lengths with our millions and billions and trillions, but we cannot run on for ever : our powers of numeration have their certain bounds, which whatever surpasses, so as that we might add and add without end yet without ever reaching it, we call infinite ; nor have we any other name for all quantities surpassing our utmost numeration. So because we call them all by one name, we suppose them all the same thing. Yet there may be great varieties among them, and they may contain one another many times over without our being able to find a difference between them : for they rank under the class of incomprehensibles, concerning which we can form no clear nor adequate conception.

But I am gotten into the wilds of abstraction, and shall be better understood by recurring to cases where we may have sensible objects to assist us. Draw two lines across one another at right angles ; describe circles, as many as you please, upon the point of intersection, whose centers lie behind each other upon one of the lines ; then turn the central
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foot of your compass to the opposite side of the same line, and draw the like number of circles respectively equal to the former, all touching in the same point. Now mathematicians will tell you that the external angles between all the circles, and those made by the transverse line with them all, are infinitely small: that the said transverse or tangential line cuts the angle between each pair of equal circles into two halves; and the angle between the two least circles contains all the rest as parts of a whole. So you see here is one infinite which contains many others within it, each of them divisible into two infinities a piece.

Lay down a shilling upon the table, and there lies an infinite space directly over it; for all the Solar and Stellar vortices, all the vast expanse containing the visible universe, if squeezed into the diameter of the shilling, would not fill up the cylinder; they could raise it only to a determinate height computable by the rules of arithmetic. Place another shilling close to the former, and there stands the like infinite space over that too. Draw a line across the two shillings thro' their point of contact, and produce it in imagination as far as you can to the right hand; as it passes along it will continually cut superficies capable of containing other shillings, each having the like cylinder over it: but as you can
never

never find an end of your line, you must conclude there runs an infinite row of columns on the right side of your shillings. So here we have the square of infinitude, that is, an infinite number of infinite spaces. You may likewise imagine another row running side by side beyond the former, another beyond that, and so on without limitation: which gives you an infinite number of rows, or the cube of infinitude. Then we may consider that there hangs the like cylinder under each shilling as rises above it; that the line might be produced on the left hand as well as on the right; and rows run along on the hither side of the first row as endlessly as on the further side: so that we have double infinities, quadruple squares, and octuple cubes of infinitude; and all these together compose the immensity of space, which we can express by no higher term than still to call it infinite.

With respect to infinite time, or eternity, we cannot find squares and cubes there; yet every common eye may see that it consists of two eternities, that which is past and that which is still to come: the one continually receiving addition, yet without encrease of quantity, the other continually perishing, yet without diminution, by the successive efflux of years and ages. This cannot happen in finite periods, where the part behind constantly

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ly gathers ground in proportion upon the part before : Methusaleh at the age of thirty, was ten years older and had ten less to live than at the age of twenty : but who will say God is older now than in the beginning, when the earth was without form and void ? or that either he, or the human soul, has less time to exist now, than at the instant when he called her forth into Being ?

Thus we see that infinites elude all our rules of arithmetic : if we add, multiply, square or cube, we cannot encrease them : if we subtract, divide, extract the square or cube root, we cannot diminish them. Whatever we do, we can make no change from what they were before : for in every process where one quantity is infinite, what other soever we work it with, still the sum, remainder, product and quotient will always be infinite. But the Divine mathematician proceeds not by our arithmetic : he wants not comprehension to grasp the immensity of space, nor line of intelligence to measure the abyss of eternity. He sees distinctly what varieties of infinites lie contained within one another, and what proportion each bears to other. Nor can we take upon us to deny that he may know there have been many eternities already past, and many still reserved in the bosom of futurity : whereof he may assign one for the distribution

bution of rewards and punishments, leaving ample room beyond for restoring equality by provisions made to bring the balance even between his particular creatures. If we cannot comprehend this, tell me what there is we can comprehend upon the article of Infinites; and then I shall admit our non-comprehension a proof of the thing not being so.

And yet I think we may gather some illustration of this matter from a case put upon the two eternities whereof we have an idea. Nobody can deny that God has had the power of creating from everlasting, nor that, whatever has been done, he might have exercised that power from everlasting: therefore there might have been creatures who had existed eternally. Suppose then there were two men, one of whom had passed an eternity in a certain degree of uneasiness, the other in an equal degree of enjoyment; and both were called to judgement to show cause why there should not be a change of conditions between them, to be never altered again. I doubt not the former would be ready enough to alledge the equity of the exchange; for that it was but reasonable that he who had been holden from all eternity in a state worse than non-entity, should be allotted a like continuance in a state as much better: and if he prevailed, would think himself made amends for the unbeginning

ning suffering he had endured, by the endless enjoyment he expected. Hence it appears an idea may be framed in speculation, of the weights hanging eternally on one side, yet the balance being brought even, and an equality subsisting if computed throughout the whole extent of existence.

10. Yet whatever limits be really set to the duration of future punishment, it will be the same to the sinner at his entrance upon it as if there were none: for if not endless it will be hopeless. For the future can affect us no otherwise than by our knowledge or idea of it: whatever good or evil fortune is to befall me to-morrow, whatever end shall then be put to my pleasures or afflictions, will give me neither joy nor sorrow while I have no suspicion of it. A man cast into a loathsome dungeon, or put on board a ship to be sent into banishment, while lamenting that he shall never see the light again, or his friends and country again, can receive no comfort from the Prince having resolved to revoke his doom, unless he be told it. In like manner when the wicked lies engulphed in the dreadful abyss of darkness, what consolation can he receive from a deliverance, however near, whereof he can have no knowledge? Does he think to retain his present sanguine expectations? They sprung from his partiality to sensual pleasures, flattering

flattering him with the belief of whatever might prove an encouragement to follow them: therefore must necessarily vanish together with the root whereout they grew. Or even supposing them founded on clearest and calmest reasonings, is he sure of carrying with him his present ideas or the remembrance of any thing he has discovered here? Or what room will there be for clear and calm reasoning in the midst of tortures? Or will not the Devils and his companions in misery, have cunning enough to frame crafty sophisms, that shall overthrow all his reasonings, and confound his understanding? If they see souls delivered every day, be sure, they will let him know nothing of the matter: but urge all their topics, and use all their artifices to aggravate his despair. And as men are here too apt to murmur against God and charge him foolishly, when things go very much amiss with them: so the reprobate, who as such must have a perverse turn of mind, when fallen under the weight of divine vengeance, will behold in God a cruel oppressor, a furious irresistible monster, having no spark of mercy in his nature, and as incapable of relenting as time is of running backwards.

And here we may observe by the way, of how great importance it is to form our notions of the divine Attributes aright, and
found

found them upon solid and consistent reason : they will then remain unshaken in all changes of situation and stand the test of adversity, to be our comfort when we need it most. Whereas if we flatter ourselves with an injudicious and ill-grounded idea of justice and goodness and indulgence, because it suits our present convenience, we shall see it wrested out of our hands some time or other, and then that will become an object of horror and despondency, which we used to look upon as our protection and licence to take our pleasures without scruple.

11. As I should be very sorry to have my speculations do hurt to any body, I shall not content myself with removing objections against them, but likewise endeavour to guard against every vain imagination that I can conceive might arise in mens minds from any thing before offered, and might have a bad influence upon their conduct. Perhaps some who are ready to catch hold of any pretence to justify them in following their own inclinations, may alledge, that since the periods and the several stages contained in them are fixed by divine appointment, they need not trouble themselves to be careful of their conduct : for whatever they do, they must run the course assigned them, and cannot alter what has been appointed by the Will of Hea-

ven. Or possibly some, too selfishly righteous, may be backward in reclaiming others whom they see travelling the road of destruction, because since there are suffering states which must be borne by somebody, they will be glad to find others ready to undertake them, as rendering their own chance of escaping the stronger. But there would be no room for these surmises, if it were remembered that I have all along disclaimed a fatality, compulsorily and unalterably fixing events dependent upon human agency : and that there being a secret Will makes no alteration in the justice and expedience of our measures ; that Will being constantly fulfilled by the free choice of our own Wills in matters lying under our power, which remain as much the proper object of our deliberation and industry as if there were no fore-knowledge or pre-appointment concerning them.

Yet the ideas of pre-causation and fatality, of certainty and necessity, are so strongly rivetted together in mens minds by custom, that it is not easy to keep them asunder, when once disjoined, without repeated efforts and placing things in various lights, one of which may chance to succeed where the others have failed. Wherefore it may not be amiss to make one more attempt for breaking the association : tho' what I have to offer

fer will be little else in substance than what I have offered before. The appointment of all events, both great and small, being made no otherwise than by the provision of adequate causes to bring them forth, the most important and momentous will fall under the same rules with the most familiar and trifling. Let us consider then how the case stands with respect to the common transactions of life. If I have friends to dine with me to-morrow, and have settled my bill of fare of things I know are to be had in the house or the yard or the market; I may look upon the appearance of the dishes upon my table as a certain event comprized in the list of appointments, because I know all the causes are ready at hand requisite to produce it: and it was certain seven years ago, tho' I did not know it then, nor could any body have foretold it. Nevertheless how is it unalterable, but that how strongly soever I have resolved to have a turkey, it is still in my power to exchange it for a goose? What compulsion was I under either in making my determination or in keeping it? Wherein does it render my cares unnecessary in giving orders to my servants for providing and preparing the meats? Or what alteration does the opinion of a pre-appointment make, so much as of a lettuce in the sallad or a garnish upon the dish?

Perhaps I design to buy a horse for my riding, but have not any particular one in my eye: I know there are enow to be had in town, and the jockeys will cheat one egregiously: yet I am resolved to deal with them as well as I can. This too stands upon the roll of appointments, for there are causes in being, dependent in a chain upon the operations of the First, which will direct me to one certain purchase: though I know not what will be the issue, yet I know it will depend partly upon my own management. Therefore what have I else to do than take the best care and get the best advice I can in the matter? And what could I do better if all things lay under the disposal of Chance, and there were neither order nor government in the universe?

So every man's future state, whether of reward or punishment, depends upon his tenour of behaviour in life, and the provision of causes influencing him to hold it. He cannot indeed foresee the issue with absolute certainty, because he cannot certainly know what trials he may be put to, nor examine all the recesses of his own heart to see precisely what degrees of strength or weakness lie latent there: yet so far as he can discern these, he may rise to a proportionable degree of assurance; and for what uncertainties remain, he may know that

a constant application of his judgement and vigilance and industry will diminish the hazard and add to his security. And what better could he augurate, or more effectual could he do, supposing God himself did not know what would become of him, or had made no appointment concerning him?

Then for the quantity of evil being ascertained, we may argue by the like parity of reason between greater evils and smaller. All the troubles, misfortunes and disappointments of this world, are owing to a concurrence of circumstances and particular causes deriving their efficacy from the First: nor when he began the chain, can we suppose him ignorant or thoughtless of every minute effect that would ensue from his operation, even to the falling of a sparrow to the ground or the shedding of a hair upon our heads. Neither can we imagine him so ill a contriver as not to have provided for as many of those casualties as were necessary for his wise and gracious purposes, or so regardless of his creatures as to permit a single one more to happen than were so necessary: for he ordains all things by number, weight and measure.

Therefore we must conclude there is a certain number of bruises, broken bones, fires, losses, vexations and other sinister accidents, appointed to befall on earth. But what rule of

duct can we gather from hence, since we know not the number? For this belongs to the secret Will, which is no guide of our proceedings. Shall I foolishly run down a precipice, where it is a hundred to one but I fall and hurt myself grievously, because all things are appointed in number, weight and measure? If I knew that I must have one tumble in my life and no more, I might as well take it now as another time: or if I knew that some one, and but one, out of twenty of us, must have a tumble, it might be thought a fit of romantic generosity to venture my own neck to save the rest. But by what rule of logic can you prove, that I shall hurt myself ever the more or less hereafter for my falling now? or that it shall anyways affect the good or bad fortune of other people?

What disasters hang over us from causes out of our power, cannot be altered by any thing we do; and what we may either bring upon ourselves or avoid, depends upon the causes suited to produce it, which in this case are our own actions. Here then we have it in our option to determine what shall be the appointed event lying in the secret Will; to add or subtract one among the number of disasters requisite, because we have the causes of it under command. Therefore if I can escape an impending danger by my care and
good

good management, I shall look upon it as a clear gain, equally with those who hold the reality and dominion of chance : for the advantage is visible, but the damage to ensue I cannot discover upon any of my principles. In like manner the future states of men depend, not upon a fatality, but upon the natural causes, to wit, their respective manners of behaviour here upon earth : and the number of either sort upon the number of persons who shall choose either course of life. Therefore he that saves himself or his neighbour from destruction, is so far from hurting any body, that he does a signal service to the universe ; by making one fewer suffering state requisite therein, than there would have been had he omitted his endeavours.

12. Now to conclude this whole article of equality, I hope nobody will take offence meerly upon account of its novelty : for however novel it may be, it hurts none of the old tenets and precepts that have been employed to keep the world in order ; nor lessens the expedience of being carefull of our conduct in a single point. It leaves justice to proceed as before in the distribution of reward and punishment according to every man's deserts : particular care has been taken to provide against every notion that might be engrafted upon it, of dangerous consequence either

to Religion or good morals : it has been applied as a persuasive to that humility and lowliness of mind, so strongly inculcated in our sacred writings : and as an encouragement, drawn from the fund of natural reason, to that unreserved and universal charity which is the grand precept both of sound philosophy and revealed Religion.

If it be said these doctrines are sufficiently recommended already upon the authority of the sacred oracles and interpretations of them by the Church, and that to lead men into another course of evidence would only be drawing aside their attention from a surer guidance: I shall answer, that those who are so happy as to follow steddily this sure guidance, and find it supply all their uses and satisfy every difficulty arising in their minds, will do well to adhere to it still, without heeding my speculations, as being not intended for them. But it has happened some how, whether by an unlucky constitution of mind, or a faulty education, or bad company or injudicious management of some preachers, or absurdities engrafted by crafty pretenders to sanctity, that this surest guidance does not obtain the deserved credit with every body. Is it not then acting agreeably to Christian charity, and the example of him who became all things to all men if by any means he might gain some, to
address

addresses these people in the way they will listen to, and attempt leading them into the same points whereto their proper guide would have conducted them, tho' by a different road wherein they may be prevailed upon to travel. And if they will be pleased to consider maturely what has been here suggested from experience and reason, together with what further their own thoughts may suggest, concerning the nature of the mind acting constantly upon motives, the dependence of effects upon causes, the universal government of Providence, the dispassionate and impartial nature of God: it seems to me as if they could not fail of seeing a solid foundation for this equality, and inferring from thence that there is no intrinsic excellence of one man above another, nor other than was the gift of heaven; and that there is a mutual connection of interests among the several members, as well of the creation as of every community contained in it, so that whoever procures any good for his neighbour, does in effect procure it for himself.

Should I be thought in some places to have run on too fine-spun argumentations, or in others drawn too strong-coloured figures, for any body's liking: let him be good natured enough to suppose, that were we to discourse over this subject in private, and he would let
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me know his taste, I should endeavour to conform myself thereto. But as I know not who may deign to cast an eye upon my labours, I must accommodate them the best I can to different tastes, and provide against all attacks, as well of the subtle miner as the open assailant. If he be already intimately persuaded of the general interest being his own upon any other grounds whatever, he has my consent to think no more of the equality ; which I urged with none other aim than to work this persuasion. But whether self-interest be the real foundation of all our rules of conduct or not, it has certainly a powerfull influence upon our motions : therefore it must be no small service to Religion and virtue, to set this spring so as that it may assist in their operations. This is the point I have been driving at, and if we both agree in the same point, we need not quarrel about the different ways whereby we arrived at it : but may go on amicably the remainder of our journey, consulting together, as often as there may be occasion, upon the most effectual methods of pursuing what we have agreed to be the truest road to our own interest.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXI.

RE-ENLARGEMENT OF VIRTUE.

IN order to understand the title of this Chapter, we must recollect that of the concluding Chapter of the first Volume, which was intitled The Limitation of Virtue. I doubt not as many good people as have had patience to go thro' the argument pursued there, have condemned me for limiting her within shamefully narrow bounds: 'tis well if they were quieted for a while by the hint dropped in the two closing Sections, of what I am now going to do; which is, to restore her to her ancient splendor, and the full glory she merits by her most arduous trials and most noble sacrifices. If they still blame me for leaving her so long under a cloud, let it be alledged in my excuse, that I could not clear up her rights sooner, having not gotten together the materials requisite for that purpose. If they urge that I ought to have prepared all my materials before I proceeded to build upon them: they may please to consider that my case is different from that of the divines. They are
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to make the proper use of an old science: I to lay the foundation of a new one.

For tho' Religion and morality be an ancient science, yet it has been placed upon so many various bottoms, the main supports of it made to bear so differently upon one another, and the whole fabric so disfigured with the additions of injudicious or ill designing workmen, that it seemed no blamable attempt to reconstruct the whole afresh from the very ground: not with design to make alterations in the chambers or apartments, but to dispose them upon a more consistent plan, and render the passages of communication less intricate and abrupt between them. In prosecution of this scheme I could take nothing for known or acknowledged, but must work my way step by step as I could, and deduce my principles anew from the materials furnished by common experience. But it is the general and allowed practice of those who trace other sciences from the beginning, to build what they can upon some of their first principles considered alone, before they proceed to collect other principles; tho' they know well enough their building will not stand in all its parts when these latter come to be employed likewise.

Your professors of natural philosophy do so in their lectures upon the five mechanical powers:

powers : if you go to apply their rules to common use you will not find them answer : but why ? Because there is a roughness in all your instruments, that will hinder their operation in the manner you was taught to expect. This the professor was not ignorant of, but would not burthen you with too many things at once, judging it expedient to instruct you thoroughly in all that his engines would perform supposing them perfectly smooth ; and reserve for other lectures to examine the nature of friction, and what alteration that will make according to the degrees of it. Or if he be to read upon gravitation, he will tell you that falling bodies pass through spaces in their descent bearing a duplicate ratio to the times of their descending : that projectiles move in a regular parabola, forming exactly the same angle in their fall to the plane of the horizon, with which they were thrown up. Try the truth of this theory with a stone or whatever comes next to hand, and you will find it prove defective : but he will afterwards explain to you how, and in what proportion, this must necessarily happen from the resistance of air.

Now the foundation which seemed to me the first to be laid, as the only sure and stable one whereon the building I had taken in hand could be erected, was the knowledge of ourselves

ourselves and of our own nature. For as it has been asked, How can a man love God whom he hath not seen, if he hate his brother whom he hath seen: so by parity of reason it might be asked, What can a man know of God or things invifible, which he cannot fee, who knows nothing of himself, his own manner of acting and thinking, or operation of the things wherewith he is daily converfant? For the ideas we can frame of God are none other than what we gather by analogy from something found among ourselves: and Religion being designed for the uses of man, cannot be so explained nor applied as to serve his uses, without a knowledge of human nature. The want of this reflection, I am apt to think, has given rise to those involuntary errors which have been fallen into in the expositions and interpretations of it: as to the designed perversions, they were made by men who had studied human nature but too well, and served their own ends upon its weaknesses. So that in this respect the children of this world, the sons of ambition and avarice, have proved wiser than the children of light; because the latter chose to remain always children, confining themselves to the tenets and abstractions taught them in their schools, without extending their observation to other things

things requisite to compleat the perfect manhood of knowledge.

Such then being my principal foundation, it behoved me to work it well, before I proceeded to mark out any other ground, which would only interrupt our progress by dividing our attention: and having gathered what observations I could make upon the motions of the mind, and the manner wherein she stands affected by the common occurrences of life, I conceived it not inexpedient to try what scheme of conduct might be constructed upon this narrow basis alone. Induced thereto partly by what we often hear asserted from the pulpit, That if we regard the happiness of this life only, still the good will be found greatly to have the advantage over the wicked: which though agreeing with my own sentiments, I resolved to give it a full and fair examination. Accordingly I pursued a train of consequences naturally resulting from the premises then in hand, whereby I found that virtue might be raised to a flourishing height, though planted upon none other ground than a due regard to our temporal happiness. And I flatter myself the divines will not think their assertion at all invalidated by what has been there done: for it has been made appear, that while we have a prospect of years to come, and which of us does not persuade himself
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he has such prospect? the surest road to a happy life lies through the practice of virtue.

But if I have failed in supporting her interests to the end, they need not be offended with me for an event, which rightly considered, terminates more in their favour than if I had succeeded, For there is not a word of God or another world to be found in the first Volume: therefore the doctrine there contained may be called the religion of an Atheist; at least such, unless I have been somewhere faulty in my deductions, as an Atheist might subscribe to. Now had it been possible to have framed a complete system of behaviour upon atheistical principles, it must have lessened the recommendation of Theology: which might then have been regarded as a matter fit only to amuse the curious in their leisure hours; but of no avail in practice nor making any alteration in the duties of life.

2. Having apologized for my limitation of virtue, I may with better grace desire the like caution may be observed in perusing several other parts of my work: and that men will not be scandalized at any thing they find in a single passage or a few pages detached from the rest, nor until they see what uses will be afterwards made of it. For the laws of philosophical disquisitions and of sermons are very different: the latter being addressed
to

to the populace, whose inattention seldom permits them to carry away more than a few separate scraps, care must be taken to deliver nothing that is not perfectly innocent to the tenderest digestion. The preacher must not do like our physicians, who often mingle antimony, mercury, solanum, opium and other poisonous drugs in their prescriptions: because mankind is so perverse, they will be sure to pick up the poison and leave the correcting ingredients behind; if not to swallow it, at least to throw in his face, or bespatter his character.

But the former are addressed to the studious, who can follow a train of reasoning throughout, and distinguish between what is asserted as a certain truth, or only as a necessary consequence from the argument at present in hand. They will not be like the politely learned, reading only to shine in conversation: whose aversion to trouble makes them expect to have all difficulties cleared up in a single page, or a whole system explained while one sits prattling over a dish of tea. These are unreasonable expectations which I am sure I cannot, and believe no man alive can, undertake to answer. Therefore must beg leave to except against the procedure of all, who shall cite a passage or two, or give an abstract of some Chapter, and then with a

confident air ask the gay circle around them, what they must think of that : as also against the judgement of any who shall pass it without hearing me through or without having cognifance of the cause whereon they pronounce.

3. Had I been withholden by the awe of these partial examiners and hasty judges from concluding my last book in the manner I did, I could not have made it so apparent as I think it must be to every one who considers the arguments urged there, of how necessary importance Religion is, not only for keeping the vulgar and the giddy in order ; but likewise for the refined and the deep-thinking. The glittering hopes and formidable terrors of another life might still have been thought useful to play off as engines upon those who consulted only their passions and had no further concern than for present pleasures : but wholly needless for such as had discernment enough to see that a decent and orderly behaviour was the proper way to attain serenity of mind, health of body, prosperity and security among mankind.

Nor indeed can it be denied there have been those who have passed through life very comfortably and even with applause, without looking to any thing beyond. Epicurus, the grand apostle of infidelity stands recorded in
history

history for his exemplary sobriety and friendliness. Atticus appears to have been the most prudent man among the Romans in his time, and to have possessed a large share even of Christian charity, doing service to all without distinction or mixture of party zeal, which then ran at the highest. And for the politicians of ancient days, many of whom proved excellent legislators and governors, 'tis pretty certain they did not believe in their country religion, nor does it appear what other religion or philosophy most of them had.

But we cannot conclude upon the tendency of principles from the practice of single persons; for no man can wrap himself up so entirely in his own notions, as not to take a tincture from others among whom he converses. For having from his childhood been used to hear the virtues constantly spoken of with honour, he will insensibly imbibe an esteem of them without knowing why: for though I cannot allow them innate, they are perhaps generally the growth of custom, our second nature. But were there a nation of Atheists, I apprehend they could not flourish long: for tho' they might find it expedient to bring up their children in sentiments of honour and probity, yet the thinking persons among them would quickly see so far into

human nature as to discover, that each man's own happiness is the proper foundation whereon all his schemes of conduct are to be ultimately placed; that honour, justice, public spirit, benevolence and the like, are but props employed to strengthen the superstructure, where the visible connection with its original basis is wanting; that the fame of their names, after themselves are fallen into annihilation, is no object deserving their regard. Therefore upon finding themselves approach near their end, when by their long experience they are become most capable of contriving for the public, they will be most careless of her interests. Nay 'tis well if they stay so long before they find occasions happen, wherein they will persuade themselves they may serve their private ends without ever being discovered, tho' to great damage of others or of the community: in which cases they will be sure to prefer their own advantage, whereby things must soon run to decay and ruin. Therefore it is incumbent upon every state to discourage the beginnings of infidelity, by all means consistent with humanity and the just rights of civil liberty.

4. And perhaps the world might still go on better, if the politicians of all countries would, as I hope those of our own already do, extend their views beyond this scene of sublunary

nary affairs, and consider themselves as citizens of the universe. That they would not lay out their whole sagacity upon the methods of bringing their schemes to bear, but bestow a little of it upon the schemes themselves; examining why they esteem power, credit, honour, riches, desirable at all: and if they can find none other Why than to make them happy, whether it becomes persons of their extensive understandings to think no further than the happiness to be had during the twenty or thirty years of their continuance in splendour here. I do not expect they will suffer themselves to be guided in their opinions by authority, nor put aside from their aims by the general estimation, nor does it behove them so to do: but then let them be sure they did not take any of them up upon the estimation of others, and those not of the soundest judgement, only because they were always told from their childhood by their nurse or their mother or every body else they met with, how fine a thing it was to be great. For it becomes persons of their extraordinary abilities to judge for themselves, to cast aside youthfull prejudices, to draw a plan of life upon the solid ground of reason, and go to the bottom of things for their foundation.

But because this is a science of itself, which those who are busied in other occupations may want leisure to pursue minutely ; I have attempted in this second Volume to trace a train of consequences from the contemplation of nature, which any one may judge of without aid of tradition or received tenets : whereby it appears that the universe lies under one compleatly regulated polity ; that the properties of bodies, the powers of animals, the talents of men, and all other provisions, are made with regard to the whole ; that the good of each particular depends upon the good of all ; and whoever adds to the happiness of another, adds thereby to his own. From hence it follows that honesty is the best policy, and an unreserved attachment to the public benefit, the surest road to self-interest : and since persons whose judgement far exceeds others, have reason to prize the approbation of that above all popular applause, that the most noble sacrifice they can make, and for which they may most deservedly applaud themselves is, when they have preferred the public good before their own private interests, or whatever they had set their hearts upon most strongly.

5. Therefore now we may do ample justice to Regulus, whom we left under a sentence of folly for throwing away life with all
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its enjoyments for a phantom of honour. For he may alledge that he had not a fair trial before, his principal evidence being out of the way, which having since collected in the course of this second book, he moves for a rehearing. For he will now plead that it was not a fantastic joy in the transports of rectitude, nor the Stoical rhodomontade of a day spent in virtue containing more enjoyment than an age of bodily delights, nor his inability to bear a life of general odium and contempt, had his duty so required, which fixed him in his resolution: but the prudence of the thing upon a full and calm deliberation. Because he considered himself as a citizen of the universe, whose interests are promoted and maintained by the particular members contributing their endeavours towards encreasing the quantity of happiness, wherever possible, among others with whom they have connection and intercourse.

He saw that his business lay with his fellow creatures of the same species, among whom a strict attachment to faith and honour was the principal bulwark of order and happiness, that a shamefull conduct in his present conflict would tend to make a general weakening of this attachment, which might introduce disorders, rapines, violences and injuries among multitudes, to far greater amount than

his temporary tortures ; that if he behaved manfully, he should set a glorious example, which might occasion prosperities to be gained to his country and all belonging to her, overbalancing the weight of his sufferings, especially when alleviated by the balmy consciousness of acting right. He was persuaded likewise that all the good a man does, stands placed to his account, to be repaid him in full value when it will be most usefull to him : so that whoever works for another, works for himself ; and by working for numbers, earns more than he could possibly do by working for himself alone. Therefore he acted like a thrifty merchant, who scruples not to advance considerable sums, and even to exhaust his coffers, for gaining a large profit to the common stock in partnership. Upon these allegations, supported by the testimony of far sighted philosophy and confirmed in the material parts by heaven-born Religion, I doubt not the jury will acquit him with flying colours, and the judge grant him a copy of the record, to make his proper use of, whenever he might be impeached or slandered hereafter.

6. Tis not unlikely here that somebody may put me in mind of Saint Evremont, who attempted to write a tragedy wherein Hippolitus was to be the principal character, but had

had not gone on far before he found his hero dwindled insensibly into a very Monsieur Saint Evremont, having the frenchman's sentiments, making his reflections, and talking exactly in the same strain. And then ask me by what authority of history I prove that Regulus had any notion of the vehicles, the Aions, the balancing periods, the all-space-filling Mundane soul, the unessential nature of justice, her generation from expedience, the purchase of estates by unavoidable or virtuous suffering, the general partnership and universal bank of Ned Search. To this question I shall reply that it is not my business to make critical remarks upon history, nor have I anything to do with the person of Regulus, nor to penetrate the real motives of his conduct. He stands with me as an ideal character, the representative of all persons who might come into his situation: and I was to show that prudential motives of true self-interest might be suggested to them, upon solid and substantial reasons, for acting in the manner he did.

Yet it is not necessary that whoever practises the like firmness of behaviour, should be led into it by just the same train of reasoning as I have drawn out: for I am not so narrow minded as to pronounce everything no more than a shining sin, which does not proceed
precisely

precisely from the principles appearing truest to me. It is enough we have shown the action to be prudent, and whoever performs it as being right, deserves our approbation, tho' he may not discern wherein the prudence of it consists. Had it indeed been undertaken out of vanity, resentment, fondness of fame or any other selfish motive, though being beneficial to the universe, the performer might have shared the fruits in common with others; yet this would have been an accidental benefit, nor would he have merited reward or commendation: but must have stood in the case of that Roman Master of the horse, who being strictly enjoined to avoid a battle during his Dictator's absence, nevertheless attacked the enemy and gained a compleat victory; for which the Dictator on his return gave him the honours usually conferred on a conqueror, and then punished him severely for his disobedience. But he who practises a self-denial or goes through a painful or perilous undertaking, which is beneficial, because esteeming it his duty, or recommended by all persons of approved judgement, or dictated by the moral sense, or upon any other of those motives comprehended under the name of conscience; does, besides the accidental benefit he knows nothing of, bring himself within the verge of justice, and the
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stream of those rewards she distributes to well-doing.

7. For it is not to be expected that every one should trace the rectitude of his measures quite up to the fountain head. Some persons have not the talents, most conditions of life do not afford the leisure, nor do some ages or countries furnish the lights, necessary for that purpose. But God gives to every man the talents, the opportunities, the lights, sufficient for the work whereto he calls him : it is the creatures business to answer the call, whether coming by the voice of his own reason, or the general recommendation of the judicious, or the admonitions of his moral sense, or whatever other channel of conveyance his best judgement shall satisfy him brings it genuine. For by following steadily the best guidance he can get against the opposition of passion, danger, pain and affliction, he shall become an object of the Divine favour. And for such as can discern what courses of conduct are most extensively beneficial, they will act prudently by leading others into them by such methods as they can, whether of persuasion or exhortation or example or applause; which last we have already seen is there most deservedly belonging where it may be most usefully applied. For in so doing, they not only procure a general advantage

vantage, but place themselves and those they prevail upon within reach of that arm of justice wherewith she distributes her rewards.

Nor need they despise those expedients for their own private use; for no man, how much soever he may see in his closet, can carry the whole chart of it abroad with him when he enters upon action: therefore it behoves him to nourish up vigorous moral senses, and fix a strong approbation upon proper objects, to direct and actuate him upon every particular occasion; and what he does by their instigation will answer all purposes as effectually as if he could have run his eye along the whole line of expedience. And after all, tho' one man may look further than another, there is none so piercing sighted as to see to the very end of the line: for it has been shown before, that the effect of our actions extends to distant times and regions, far beyond the reach of mortal ken. So that the wisest man can proceed only by rule and guidance, not by knowledge: taking the expedience of his conduct to the welfare of mankind, as an evidence of its being expedient to the invifible world.

8. But the necessity of rules and principles for our direction, gives rise to a new species of prudence, which could not have had Being, were

were we capable of taking all our measures upon a full knowledge of their expedience: for it is not enough to consider the usefulness of an action, but we must likewise take into account how far it may either confirm or weaken the influence of some wholesome rule; because more good or harm may be done that way than by any direct consequences of the thing we do. For there is a degree of sacredness belonging to all rules, proportionable to their importance and the authority whereon they rest, which must not be violated without very cogent and evident cause. Yet on the other hand, since no rule is without exception, there may be too strict an adherence to them, especially when some one becomes predominant, so as to work a disregard of all the rest: which is the case with your sectaries and very violent people of all denominations, who are so terrified at the barking dogs of Scylla that they run headlong upon Charybdis. Therefore this necessity we have been speaking of, does not supersede the use of private judgement, which may find employment enough in comparing rules and principles, in choosing whose guidance we shall trust to, in understanding the directions and applying them to particular occasions.

For it is not enough to follow the best authority without some caution had of the channels

nels thro which it passes, because these have been known sometimes totally to change the quality of the stream. It is reported of him who boasted of being the oldest and I trow the wisest king in Europe, that upon some body humbly representing to him that he could not alter the laws without Parliament, Prithee! man, says he: don't I make the judges? Then I make the law. So there have been interpreters who have made the law, and the Gospel, and philosophy, and right reason, to be just what they pleased. Therefore it behoves us to be circumspect, not depending upon zeal alone without discretion, nor imitating the Papists, who if they get rid of so much money in what they call charity, no matter how applied, esteem it a sure draught on St. Peter: but tho there be a universal Bank, unless we take the best care we can in our ability and the circumstances of the situation, that what we throw in be real sterling Good, it will make no figure upon our account. Yet no man need disturb himself for unavoidable errors or misguidings; but may trust the wisdom of Providence to bring good profit out of his foolishness.

9. But tho invincible ignorance will justify an error, hastiness and passion will not: for there are religious passions as well as sensual and worldly, and the former are more dangerous

rous than the latter by how much the best things corrupted become the worst. The most noble enterprizes have been atchieved by a sedate and steady courage, not by a boisterous impetuosity. Especially when such sacrifices as that of Regulus are to be made, it requires the greatest calmness of judgment to examine and weigh all the motives for offering it. For life, health, ease and fortune, are not to be thrown away lightly nor wantonly: they are the blessings of heaven, well deserving our value and care to preserve them, nor is it justifiable to part with them unless on very weighty considerations; because the larger the price is to be paid, the more needful it becomes to examine well the value of the purchase and security of the title. Wherefore there is a due caution to be had in seeing that we have a warrant for what we undertake: because else, after putting ourselves to vast expence of toil and trouble, we may earn nothing beside reproof for having omitted a task we might have performed more easily.

When young people first acquire a liking to virtue, the fire of their blood sometimes lights up an ambition of attempting the most arduous exercises, and gaining the topmost summit of it at once. But let them remember how they were led by degrees into the learning or profession they have knowledge of, being

ing taught the rudiments compleatly first, and instructed in the lower branches before they were permitted to assist in the grand performances of art: in like manner let them study the duties of life lying every day in their way, and make themselves perfect in the common virtues, before they undertake the shining. But this knight-errant humour of seeking adventures and perilous encounters, quickly subsides, unless where fomented by enthusiasts with their incessant rantings; whereby they fright or tease their followers into painful austerities, dangerous abstinences, tedious and fatiguing devotions, no ways conducive to make them more usefull in their stations. Which is just as absurd as if a taylor or a shoemaker should live in a boat upon the salt water, to enure himself to the hardships of a sea voyage: or lie out whole nights in a ditch by way of using himself to a campaign or a siege, to neither of which services he is ever likely to be called. For Providence appoints to every man his station in this world: it is his business to consider what are the duties of it, and furnish himself with such qualifications as may carry him thro those duties compleatly; because this will carry him surest to all the happiness within his power to attain.

For even if faith be the saving principle, yet no man can have solid grounds to believe
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he has a saving faith, otherwise than by the fruits it bears: so that good works are either the one thing needfull, or the sole evidence of that which is so. But good works are such only as may prove good for something, or from whence good may redound to mankind: and those are the best which tend to the most beneficial consequences in our power to produce or in our skill to contrive. But whenever duty calls, provided all possible care and consideration be taken to know its voice, no man need fear that he shall be a loser by answering the call, whatever hard service or costly sacrifice he be put to: for if the fruits of his labour hang too remote to touch his notice, they will be brought nearer by the reward annexed to the performance.

10. Thus have I brought matters at last to an issue that I hope will scandalize nobody: and this may atone for the liberties taken in arriving at it by an unusual road; for there is a Latin proverb which says The end crowns the work. If I have seemed to deviate sometimes into the paths of freethinking, the orthodox know well there are persons who have an utter aversion against travelling in the beaten track: then they cannot take it amiss that, by mingling among stragglers, I have attempted to bring some into the very point whereto they would lead them. Nor can the latter

charge me with playing booty, or practising artifices upon them : for they may see I have proceeded all along with an unawed freedom, doing my utmost to cast all prejudices aside, and take every step in the way my best judgement should direct. I did indeed suspect at setting out that the roads of reason and Religion, rightly pursued, would conduct to the same end. For if God has given us any commands, as he has no ends of his own to answer by them, they must have been given for our benefit : therefore we are taught they all terminate in two principal aims : to bring us into a hearty desire of one another's happiness equally with our own, and to inspire us with such just sentiments of himself as conduce most to our happiness.

And tho reason, whose office lies not in giving us an ultimate end of action, but in contriving the surest methods of attaining that suggested by appetite, can set out upon none other bottom than our own interest : yet we have seen how self-interest leads into disinterestedness, into an unreserved attachment to the general good, and into a constant dependence upon Providence ; because were that away, we could find no certain cause of all we see happen around us, and if we lose sight of goodness or esteem any thing left to chance, the success of our best endeavours will be uncertain

certain and our hopes become like castles in the air. So that whether we use the daylight or the candle of the Lord, provided we can keep our eyes clear from the films of passion and prejudice, we shall find objects presented in the same shapes and the same colours, tho not always with equal lustre.

11. This consideration may rescue philosophy from the imputation she has lain under with some righteous persons of being dangerous to Religion and piety ; it was not uncommon for whoever professed to pursue the light of nature, to be presently suspected of unsoundness in his principles ; of a secret design to undermine the belief of a Providence, if not that fundamental article of all religion, the Being of a God. Nor can it be denied there have been grounds for such suspicion : at least we must acknowledge that those who had such evil designs, have proceeded by undertaking to explain all phenomena around us by the powers of nature, and attempting to confine the attention of mankind to them alone. But the state of natural philosophy is not the same now as formerly : it is become an innocent inoffensive science, a useful minister in the temple of the Lord. In ancient times nature was esteemed an original source of Being distinct from the Almighty, matter was thought possessed of an existence which he

never gave it, and even the elements to have their differences and qualities independent on him ; the only province left him being that of gathering them into forms and assortments, in order to generate thereby such habitable earths and plants and animals as they were respectively capable of producing. And tho these notions have been since exploded, God being generally acknowledged the Creator as well as Maker of all things visible and invisible ; yet there still remains an opinion with many of an abstract, eternal, uncreated nature of things, which controuls the measures and directs the wisdom of God, as well in the exercises of his creative power as in the administration of sublunary affairs. Thus while there were two First Causes supposed to have a joint share in the production of all events, tis no wonder that such as were zealous for the glory of God, looked with a jealous eye upon every attempt to extend the province of nature, as being an encroachment upon the Divine prerogative and a certain mark of disloyalty.

But I have endeavoured to exhibit nature in another aspect, not as an original cause, but an establishment of the Almighty ; her abstract as well as sensible essences receiving their permanency and her courses their stability from the covenant or immutable Will of God ;
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her substances, both material and spiritual, together with their primary as well as secondary qualities, their applications to one another, their mutual affections, all effects and events resulting therefrom, deriving primarily from none other source than the power, the wisdom, the goodness, the equity and good pleasure of their Maker: and the chain of second causes producing them, being planned out with certain foreknowledge and exact intention of every particular it should bring forth. Therefore I may hope to stand absolved from all suspicion of impiety, nor need I scruple the hazard of adding too largely to nature, for by giving to her I take nothing from God: because nature is the work of God, her acts are his acts, her productions his gifts, her every operation, as well necessary as fortuitous, an execution of his Will. I have no where denied that he may sometimes act immediately without the intervention of second causes, or to alter their courses: on the contrary have offered arguments in support of that opinion. Yet this does not hinder but that we may strive to account for every thing we can by natural causes, and retain an averfeness against multiplying interpositions: as believing that whenever made, they are made solely for manifestation of the Divine power to intelligent creatures, not from a necessity to

correct errors in the first design, which were unforeseen or could not be provided against. Wherefore it may be presumed they happen very rarely, and then are so striking that all endeavours to avoid them will but convince us the more strongly of a divine operation.

12. Neither was the study of human nature regarded with a more favourable eye than that of the external : for there being a great deal of machinery in the human composition, those who applied to a close examination into the structure and workings of that, were apt to think too slightly of the spiritual part ; in-somuch that it was a current saying within these two hundred years, Wherever you see three physicians, you see two Atheists. But I do not apprehend them in the same sentiments now : I have dipped into some of their works to gather from thence materials suitable to my own science, and they appear to me as orthodox as any other class of people among us : nor do I seem at a loss to account for the change. The zeal of the spiritualists urged them to ascribe more to the spiritual part than belonged to it singly : this could not escape the observation of such whose studies had brought them intimately acquainted with the body. They saw that understanding might sometimes be restored to madmen by medicine : they knew their drugs and chymical preparations

rations had a powerfull effect upon the imagination, so as to warm with sanguine hope or chill with melancholy and despondency : they found that a delicacy of texture in the fibres of the brain, a briskness of circulation, a purity of the circulating juices, gave birth to the natural talents, and a predominancy in some one of the principal humours distinguished the characters of men : that an unnatural pressure or a little heterogeneous mixture in the medullary substance within the head disabled the soul from exercising her functions : and that in general the tenour and colour of our thoughts depended very much upon the present disposition of the body. From hence they thought it demonstrable that powers had been ascribed to the soul which really resided in the body ; and might be tempted too hastily to conclude that she had none at all belonging to her, but that thought itself with all its varieties were nothing more than a lucky configuration and diversity of motions in matter.

But this temptation is now removed, for an exacter scrutiny into the properties of matter and motion, has now convinced the world that no assortment of corporeal particles, how nicely soever arranged, can form an intelligent Being. And the conviction is so general and so strong, that a late noble writer, whose ru-

ling passion, after ambition had been torn from him, being that of running down the clergy and every thing they taught, he would in mere spite to them have been an atheist if he could, and did bring himself to be a thorough corporealist, ridiculing the doctrine of spiritual substance with the vile pun of calling it the pneumatic philosophy : yet could never bring himself to believe sense and understanding a necessary result from the human machinery ; but taking hold of an expression dropped by Mr. Locke, insisted that the faculty of thinking was annexed by Almighty Power to the system of matter contained in our several compositions.

Thus the indiscretion of zealots has hurt the credit of the spiritual soul, by claiming more for her than was her due : and her interests are best supported by examining fairly what is her lawfull property, and distinguishing it from those powers which she derives by conjunction with her partner the body. Under this apprehension I set out in my first Chapter with observing that there are faculties of the mind and faculties of the man, I have since proceeded to show that percipience, rationality, cogitation, study and all species of thought, are faculties of the compound : the mind, or purely spiritual part, having only a capacity of receiving such perceptions as
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shall from time to time be excited in her, but what perceptions shall be so excited, depends entirely upon the action of corporeal substance wherewith she stands vitally united. Now the action and qualities of a corporeal agent must result from the position or arrangement and motion of the component particles whereof it consists : so that the thoughts and perceptions of the mind follow precisely according to the position and motion of the material corpuscles affecting her ; yet are they her own thoughts and perceptions, never having place in the matter which produced them.

The case here seems something similar to that of letters in a book : a printer with the very same types can run ye off a bible, a Virgil, Newton's optics, Lisle's husbandry, Joe Millar's jests, or Rochester's poems. Those books will raise very different sentiments in the mind ; and the ideas of him that opens them follow precisely according to the position of the four and twenty letters in the page before him. Nevertheless the sentiments and perceptions are in the mind alone : the books themselves as they lie closed upon the shelves, have neither piety nor poetry nor philosophy nor ribaldry nor other sentiment belonging to them, nor can they produce any understanding or apprehension without a reader. In like manner the colours of bodies are holden to depend upon

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on the pores in their surfaces, and their shapes upon the order and disposition of their parts ; so that you have the sight of red or blue, of round or square, according to the texture of pores or situation of parts in the objects you successively look upon : yet all the colours and figures in the world shut up by themselves, can never produce a sense of vision without an eye to behold them.

Thus let the corporealists insist as strongly as they please that the characters and thoughts of men result from their machinery and organization, we have a ready answer, that such result could not take place unless there were a perceptive spirit to receive the action of the machine : and for any body to imagine otherwise would be as absurd as to suppose that a bible might raise a sentiment of Religion without a reader to peruse it, or the grass a sensation of green without an eye to discern it. Then as the mind has an activity too, by which she can turn to any page or object within her reach, fitted to exhibit particular ideas and appearances before her, and likewise some command over her mental organs to put them upon exciting particular trains of thought and meditation : there is no less room for prudence and good management in the exercise of this power than if, as formerly apprehended, she performed her cogitative

tative functions wholly retired within herself without aid of any material instrument whatever.

13. There are some particulars not usually taken notice of, which I have been led to consider in my enquiry into the nature of the mind: as substance, individuality, an extent of presence, and the co-existence or contiguity of agent and patient in all immediate action. It is the fashion to pass over such subjects slightly as matters of mere curiosity and wanton speculation, to be remembered no further than for entertaining the company in conversation with the peculiar notions of such an author, without caring whether there is any truth in them or no. But I humbly conceive them to be matters of some moment: therefore wish they might be maturely weighed and ruminated upon by persons who have a talent that way. For I am not so confident of my own decisions as to desire they should be taken upon trust: I had rather every one would satisfy himself by the careful exercise of his own understanding, and discover any latent fallacy that may have escaped my penetration. To me it seems no trifling discovery to know that we are real substances, nor merely qualities, either necessarily resulting from certain systems of organized matter or annexed thereto by the arbitrary Will of
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our Maker. For our being substances seems the strongest evidence that can be had from natural reason, of our perpetual duration : because substances can never be destroyed by any operation of second causes, whereas secondary qualities resulting from composition cannot survive the dissolution of their compounds, and a quality annexed miraculously to some system must be presumed to cease as soon as the system is broken up. Then if the mind be substance it must be an individual: because if it were not, it would be a system of so many distinct substances as the parts it contains, and the perceptive and active faculties would be resulting or annexed qualities belonging to the system.

But the mind being a true individual, not consisting of parts whose various disposition among one another might produce a change of form or quality, must be always the same in herself that she ever was. And this individuality of the mind will help us to a clearer and steadier idea of personality, the identity of person constantly accompanying that of the perceptive individual: for though we vulgarly apprehend our whole human composition to be ourselves, and the body continually changes both in form and substance from the cradle to the grave, yet we esteem ourselves the same person all along; and whatever
composition

composition of quite different substance, size and make, it may please God to cast us into in some future stage of our existence, while it serves for organs of perception and instruments of action to the same individual, we shall apprehend it to be our own persons. Nor, provided we remember our present state and know that we have been for some time dis-united, shall doubt of its being a resurrection of the same body: as likewise its aptness of organization to serve for higher uses of intelligence and activity, will denominate, it a spiritual body, in contradistinction to our present which is stiled the natural or carnal. Add further that this individuality affords a strong presumption of our intrinsic equality, because all the difference of powers, faculties, understanding and character, we know of among perceptive Beings, results from the compounds whereof they are respectively made ingredients, or the changes worked in them by the action of external objects: and every one is capable of exchanging conditions with every other, upon being vitally united to the same material organization and furnished with the same provision of externals.

The sphere of presence occupied by the mind, and contiguity in immediate action, depend upon one another: and here it will be proper
to

to consider whether, in the most distant operation, there must not be a contact or co-existence in the same place, of the several media as they transmit the action; or whether the Postulatum I have assumed may be denied, to wit, that nothing can act or be acted upon while there is the least hair-breadth distance intervening, unless there be some medium passing between them, and then the medium must be contiguous to the agent on receiving, and to the patient on transmitting the impulse. A tower twenty miles off may strike a sensation upon us; but then the rays must fall upon the tower and be reflected from thence to our eyes, stopping at the retina: the vibrations they excite there are propagated along the optic nerves to some corpuscles lying within or contiguous to the mind herself, from whose immediate action alone she receives her sensation. But since we receive sensations from more corpuscles together than can possibly come in contact with a mathematical point, it seems to follow demonstrably that the mind exists or is toti-present throughout a distinguishable portion of space, large enough for all those corpuscles to enter or stand round. Then as the perceptions of the mind depend solely upon the action and modification of these corpuscles, it will be worth while to consider whether the like action and modification

fication may not be produced by other objects than those fitted to strike upon our present gross corporeal organs, and shorter channels than those employed in our animal machinery; or nature may not have other ways of exciting perceptions in us than those we now experience.

14. As to the hypotheses, I never propounded them for articles of faith, therefore am under no temptation to think the less favourably of anybody for rejecting them; they are intended only to illustrate the possibility of a mutual relation between things seen and unseen, to the imaginations of such persons who are not thoroughly reconciled to the idea of heavy bodies like our own, of fleeting shadows, of winged angels and an eternity of psalm-singing, which have been so successfully employed upon the many as to render any other representation needless for common use; and who have so full a persuasion of the Divine wisdom and entire command over all the powers of nature, as to believe that the sentences of the last judgement may be executed, reward and punishment administered, by certain stated laws established for governing the operation of second causes. Nevertheless I must confess myself fond enough to fancy those hypotheses not confined to bare possibility, nor
without

without a considerable degree of probability too : but then I would desire not to be mistaken in the grounds which this probability is built upon. I do not pretend to prove the reality of the little fœtus, forming and fashioning within us by any experience of my own : I never felt it move nor had other sensible evidence of its existence, for I have not the knack of inward feelings, like the Methodists and the Quakers, though perhaps I have passed as many hours in silence and retirement within myself as either of them. Thus much indeed, I think appears from the lectures of anatomists, that the last action of the machine traceable by their science, that is, the inner ends of our nerves, stretch over a much larger compass than the sphere of the mind's presence can be supposed to extend to : from whence it necessarily follows there must be some fine material organization, minuter than all the contrivances of anatomy can discover, between the nerves and the mind, for transmitting their action onwards to her. And constant experience of our habits, our passions, inclinations, tastes and various ways of thinking contracted by custom, may convince us that our daily actions, discourses and thoughts, have an effect upon the most internal part of our composition, so as to work a permanent change of form and disposition there.

But

But whether this organization be drawn out in such an ethereal cobweb as represented in the Chapter on the Vehicles, or whether upon death it shall detach from the nerves and fly off together with the spiritual inhabitant enclosed therein, or shall still continue diversly disposed in make and texture, according to what has passed with it during life, I do not undertake to decide by any branch of physiology, what I have offered upon those points I give only as hypothesis, whose probability must rest entirely upon such evidence as can be drawn in its favour from that sole fountain whence we can gather any conclusion concerning things unseen, namely our idea of the divine Attributes and administration of affairs throughout the moral world. But it being a general received tenet that this life is a preparation for the next, the soul of the wicked going forth in a condition utterly unfit for heaven, so as that if admitted there, it could find no relish in the joys of the place; one cannot easily imagine how this could be the case, unless the soul were understood of an organized compound which might receive alteration by the habits contracted upon earth. For if there be an intrinsic difference among individuals, it must have been made in them at their creation, and continue in them so long as they continue in being: because a perceptive indi-

vidual is capable of no change in form or quality, or other alteration than that momentary one of successive perceptions excited by the action of objects upon it. The same reason, joined to the belief that a good man may fall from his goodness and the wicked sincerely repent, will evince that the virtues and vices reside in the organization, not in the individual : and that the perceptive spirit of a reprobate is as fit to animate a glorified body, if divine justice could permit it entrance therein, as that of the most exemplary Christian.

The supposition of a Mundane Soul seems to fill imagination with the highest idea it can contain of the divine power and magnificence, leaving no part in the boundless empire uninhabited : to connect the whole host of material and spiritual Beings under one all-comprehensive polity : to suggest uses for the most distant bodies discoverable, and minutest particles conceivable : and best to reconcile the existence of evil with our notions of infinite goodness, by reducing it to a scarce perceptible proportion in comparison with the vast profusion of happiness abounding every where. All this I think might carry the force of demonstration if it were not for one weak link in the chain, which is, that the plan of universal government must be executed by methods

thods which we are capable of laying down upon the chart of our imagination : but I am so sensible of the narrowness of our faculties that I cannot lay any stress upon this assumption. Nevertheless we are encouraged upon the best authorities to frame such ideas of the things unseen as we can imagine : and the good effects resulting from the hypotheses may plead excuse for a favourable propensity towards them. For if any man should happen to entertain a strong persuasion of their being real truths, it must give him a grand opinion of the lot of his existence ; abate his fondness for the paltry pleasures of this world ; make him sensible of the intrinsic equality between fellow creatures and mutual connection of interests among them, that strongest cement of union and firmest support of universal hearty charity.

15. These consequences may serve for my apology with such as might charge me with drawing off men's attention from the light of the Gospel by fixing it upon that of nature : for an endeavour to profit by the one does by no means imply a slight of the other, because both rightly pursued will for the most part conduct to the same points. I have introduced several texts in the course of my progress to show the conformity of their dictates with

the decisions of human reason : and the conclusions of the last section, which appear resulting from the main tenour of my design, are strongly inculcated in the sacred scriptures. If that of intrinsic equality be thought otherwise at first sight, yet upon mature consideration it will be found to follow necessarily from that which I take to be a favourite doctrine of Scripture, namely, that it is God who giveth us both to will and to do : and whether he give them by his second causes of formation in the womb, of education, good examples and conversation, or by supernatural grace, all these lie under his absolute disposal and were settled by his eternal purpose before the foundations of the world. So that we are nothing in ourselves, no better one than another ; our faith, our holiness, our zeal to good works and our virtues, being not originally our own, nor created with us, but derived solely from his bounty : and he could as easily have given them to Judas or Simon Magus as to John or Paul.

The study of nature is so far from being a mark of hostile disposition to the sacred records, that we cannot receive the full benefit from them, nor even enter into their true spirit without it : they must have some interpreter, and if human reason be not employed, passion or prejudice or vanity or peculiarity or whimsy

fy or private interest will intrude into the office, and what wild work they can make stands sufficiently manifested by fatal experience. There is scarce an absurdity that has not been proved by the Gospel. Papal tyranny stood upon the donation of the keys to Peter: the cruelties of persecution were authorized by the order Compell them to come in: the Romish legends, the rantings of methodism, Barclay's apology for the Quakers, the dreams of the Moravians, the treatises of all sectaries, appear thick stuck with texts: even Mahomet could find a prophecy of himself in the Comforter who was to come and show us all things. Every one of these pretend that theirs is the genuine sense, and all other interpretations a perversion of Scripture: but what likelier method can be taken for deciding among them, than by comparing them with that other Code which God has written in legible characters upon his works? which comparison cannot be made without a carefull attentive perusal and competent knowledge of both.

The professed design of the whole Jewish and Christian dispensation was to restore Man to that perfection of his nature wherein he was created: therefore the doctrines, the precepts, the examples, the institutions recorded there, must be regarded as the *materia medica* proper for a distempered constitution. For

the commands of God are not arbitrary : he has made nothing our duty by his authority, which he had not before made our interest by the circumstances of that nature whereof he has permitted us to partake. Hence his rules of government for the brutes are often contrary to those enjoined to Man, because their natures are so : to the former he has said by his laws of instinct Thou shalt do murder, Thou shalt commit adultery ; so the wolf makes it his business to worry the harmless sheep, the pike is taught to prey upon his own species, the bull has commerce with his mother, his sisters and his daughters, he breaks fence into his neighbours farm to drive away a weaker bull and seize upon his seraglio. But these practices must introduce continual disorder and confusion among men, and lose them the most valuable benefits of society : yet some might not see those consequences in particular instances, and more would be so intent upon present gratification as not to mind consequences at all. Therefore God has issued his commands to Man, saying, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, and enforced them with rewards and punishments for a remedy against the shortsightedness and weakness of human nature : that they may serve as an instruction to the prudent to warn him of an evil tendency he did not discern, and a powerfull

powerfull restraint upon the sensual to withhold him from running into mischiefs he would not have heeded at a distance.

Nor yet does it suffice that we have a compleat dispensary of remedies without knowing how to apply them in particular cases; and for gaining the art of making proper application it behoves the physician to study, not only the *materia medica*, but likewise the constitution, the disorders incident thereto, the present habit of body in the patient, and in what condition of solids and humours a soundness of health consists. Now in the science of medicine respecting the mind, our foundation must be taken from the sensitivotional constitution of Man, by contemplation of which it will presently occur, that the perfection of our nature lies in an entire subjection of the sensitive faculties to the rational: it will then appear upon due consideration of the matter, that the rational faculty constantly prompts to pursue the general or greater good, in all actions which may anywise affect another person or number of persons; and tho' many of our actions concern nobody beside ourselves, yet even here it will recommend our own general good, in preference to any particular pleasure that stands at present uppermost in the fancy.

This then is the perfect soundness of health and ought to be made the ultimate intention of all applications, namely, to have the inferior faculties so well disciplined as that they may stand always ready to assist the superiour in a steady prosecution of that aim, the attainment of greater good preferably to the less. It will be requisite further to examine what particular disorders of the mind upon any occasion prevent the due subordination of her powers, to which of them the remedies prescribed are respectively applicable, what is their natural efficacy, and in what manner they operate: taking our measures from the nature of the medicine and nature of the distemper, not looking for an ideal abstract goodness or secret virtue transferable from the one to the other, nor supernatural powers annexed arbitrarily by the Will of God. Whereby we shall best learn how to administer the proper quantity and vary the several species according to the circumstances of the case: escaping the extravagance of zealots who think to do every thing with one recipe, which like Tar water, is to cure all maladies and can never be poured down in too copious draughts.

16. But this general good for the most part lies too remote to be seen distinctly at a single glance, and the paths leading to it are too intricate and too much involved among one another

no other for us to discern which is the properest to be pursued upon every present occasion: for our own subsequent actions, those of other people and the uncertain workings of external causes, will often interfere to change the effect of those we undertake, and render that inexpedient which appears eligible to our present apprehension. Therefore to make the wilderness practicable there must be passages worked out, particular rules and directions framed, by which a common man may find his way in every situation wherein he happens to stand; and under-aims branched out conducting to the principal, which must be varied from time to time according to the variation of circumstances occurring. For the greater good is sometimes attained by a close attention to ourselves and our private advantages, to making provision for the body as well as the mind, to divertisements and pleasures for the recreation of both, to rivalry, contention and artifice, to opposition, censure and punishment of such as would bring damage upon ourselves or our neighbours.

But pleasures cannot be well enjoyed, nor contention and opposition carried on successfully, without a thorough engagement to the objects before us: for if the mind be drawn off by contemplation of distant prospects and consequences,

consequences, she can never exert her efforts sufficiently to compass the business in hand. Now this occasional attachment to private emolument, to divertisement and present pleasure, to the means of disappointing, displeasing and hurting other persons, has a tendency to draw men from their principal aim; induces many, who see the necessity of such attachment, to think a steady pursuit of the general good a romantic impracticable scheme; and raises the greatest difficulties to a scholar in the science of morality. Which difficulties must be removed, and the grounds laid down whereupon the general interest requires that we should turn our back upon it for a while, before a system can be stricken out that shall be practical or fit for common use: that shall neither mislead the serious into a plan of life utterly unfit for the world, nor the sanguine into an aversion against virtue as debarring them from all innocent enjoyment and the prosecution of their allowable desires.

This is what I do not pretend to have done, as being too much for one undertaking. My address is made to the Few, and my aim extends no further than to suggest a clue by help whereof a performance, intended for the Many, may be better calculated to answer its purpose. Which it seems likeliest to be when the operator abstains from the ideal world of abstract
unsubstantial

unsubstantial Beings, essential rectitude in rules, intrinsic goodness, holiness or merit in opinions or practices, and secret energies passing from things external into the mind itself; whereby Religion and philosophy have sometimes been made a mystery throughout, a tissue of unmeaning words filling the ear and raising whirlwinds in the imagination but never touching the understanding, or turned into systems of occult quality and magic: but when instead of taking this rout, he bends his whole thoughts to examine every thing by its natural tendency to the greater good, so as to explain when and why it is better that a man should turn the right cheek to him that has smitten the left, deny himself innocent pleasures, forego his private advantages, hazard his life, his health and all his valuables, for the sake of other persons; and when it is more for the general good that he should follow his pleasures or profit, take care of his health, his family, his estate, oppose or rival, thwart, censure or punish; for if none of these things were ever done by the virtuous, how would the world be the better as human nature stands circumstanced at present? or if he cannot explain these points to every capacity, yet let him take care to understand them himself, and recommend nothing to another which he cannot

cannot explain the reasons of to his own satisfaction.

Therefore as I have not been able to run these profitable lengths, I cannot boast of great services to the public: but shall found my contentment upon the hope that my labours may prove the remote occasion of more extensive good being done to my compatriots, or perhaps to mankind in general.

F I N I S.

PART I

THE first part of the work is devoted to a general survey of the subject, and to a discussion of the principles which govern the action of the mind. The author then proceeds to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind, and to a description of the different kinds of knowledge which are acquired by the human mind. The work is divided into two main parts, the first of which is devoted to a general survey of the subject, and the second to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind.

PART II

THE second part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind, and to a description of the different kinds of knowledge which are acquired by the human mind. The author then proceeds to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind, and to a description of the different kinds of knowledge which are acquired by the human mind.

PART III

THE third part of the work is devoted to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind, and to a description of the different kinds of knowledge which are acquired by the human mind. The author then proceeds to a detailed examination of the various faculties of the mind, and to a description of the different kinds of knowledge which are acquired by the human mind.

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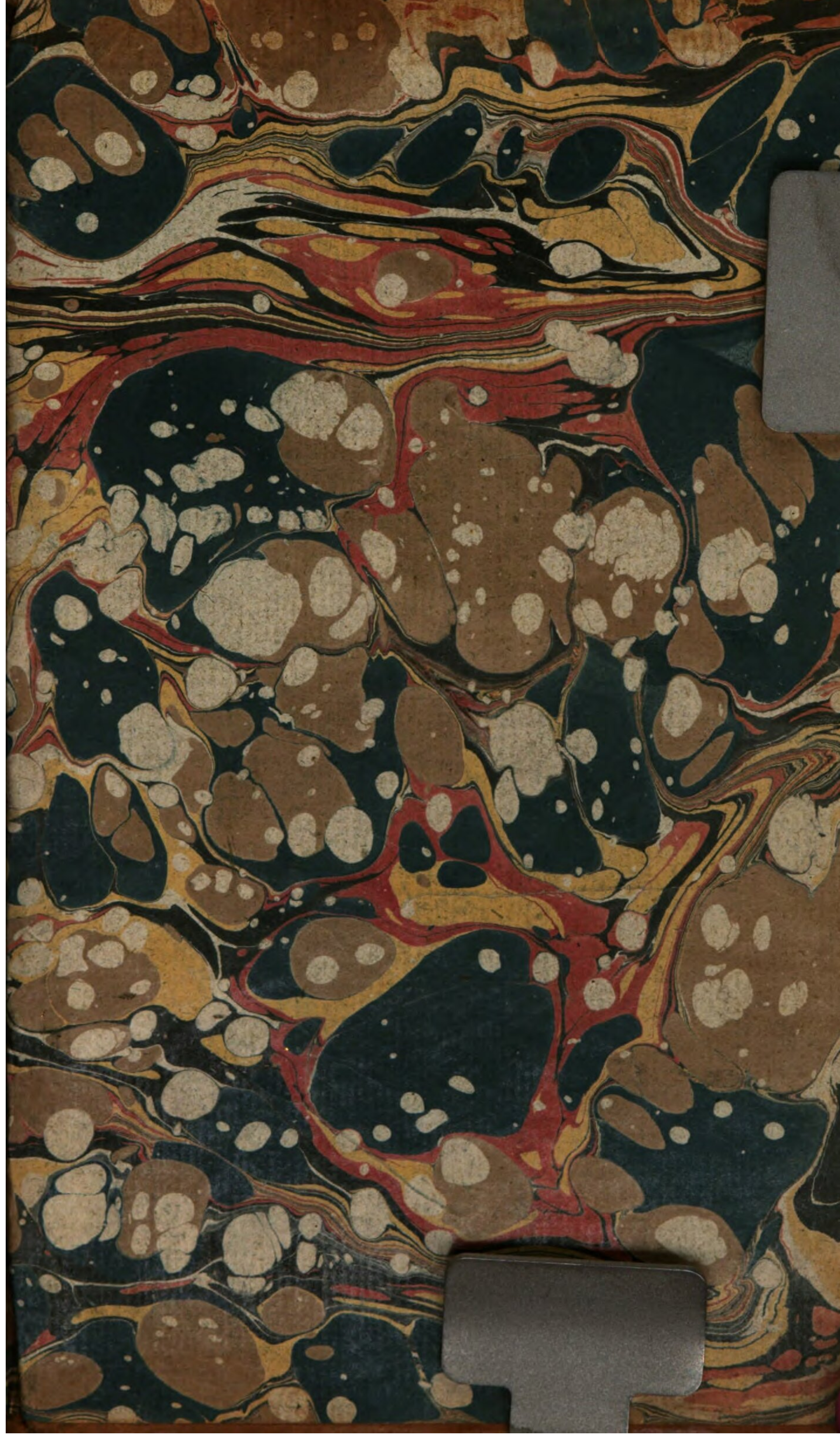
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